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SOLITARY WALKS

THROUGH MANY LANDS.

W. G. Co

BY

DERWENT CONWAY:

AUTHOR OF "TALES OF ARDENNES," &c. &c.

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SWEDEN.

SWEDEN.

THE FALL OF TROLHETTA.

SECONDARY only to the stormy ocean, a great water-fall is the most sublime spectacle which the natural world offers to our contemplation. Ever rushing on, and never exhausted, it presents a striking image of eternity; and to me, it seems also, the personification of resistless power; and power, I imagine to be the true origin of the sublime, whatever Burke may have said to the contrary.

In my capacity of a traveller through unfrequented countries, I ought to speak of the noise of the fall, heard many leagues distant;

of the spray, which was seen a mile off; and of all the other accompaniments of great water-falls; for it must be recollected, that the fall of Trolhetta is the highest fall in Europe of the same volume of water; and the sublimity of a cataract, is in proportion to the quantity of water that falls, rather than to the height of the fall. I have seen cataracts of many hundred feet high, in Switzerland, the Tyrol, in Norway, and even in Scotland, Wales, and Westmoreland; but these produce no effect in comparison with a greater body of water falling from a comparatively trifling height: little streams, tumbling down the ravines of lofty mountains, leaping from rock to rock, or glistening like plates of polished silver as they glide over smooth stones, are exceedingly beautiful, and picturesque, and add greatly to the fascination of mountain scenery,—but they do not even border upon the sublime.

The quantity of water that falls at Trolhetta within any given time, I have no means of stating precisely; but something may be gathered from the fact, that the river Gotha is the only outlet of a lake one hundred miles in length, and fifty in breadth,—which receives no fewer than twenty-four rivers, and whose level is at least three hundred feet above that of the sea.

A great water-fall is a thing to see, not to describe; all description at least must be unsatisfactory to whoever has contemplated it. Above the fall, the water smoothly glides on, increasing in rapidity, but still quite unruffled, until it reaches the verge of the precipice; it then darts over; falling in one broad sheet, until, about forty feet lower, it is broken by some jutting rocks. Then begins the grandeur of the spectacle—it seems like a solid moving mass, tossed from rock to rock, now heaving itself up in yellow foam, now boiling and tossing in huge eddies, growing whiter and whiter in its descent, till at last, it is fretted into one beautiful sea of snowy froth. Sometimes, the spray, rising in dense clouds, hides the abyss beneath,—but at times, it clears away for a moment, and reveals a dreadful gulf, which the eye dares not fathom. There is a rock that protrudes about twenty feet over the middle of the upper fall, and which may be reached in perfect safety. I sat upon it for about ten minutes, but feeling myself growing giddy and nervous, I left it. While seated here, a large log of wood was sent down the fall, by persons to whom the traveller gives a trifle for the exhibition. It is hardly worth even a trifle; for nothing can add to the magnificence of the spectacle: it displays

however, the resistless power of the element; for the log, which is of gigantic dimensions, is tossed like a feather upon the surface of the water, and is borne to the foot almost in an instant.

DENMARK.

DENMARK.

CHAPTER I.

The Sound—Elsinore.

It is quite impossible to imagine a day of more perfect loveliness, than that upon which I arrived at the ferry opposite to Elsinore; but it was altogether in vain to attempt crossing by the aid of the wind. I hired a small boat with two oars, and in this humble manner, did I make my entrance into the king of Denmark's dominions.

Every Englishman has, or ought to have some associations with the castle of Elsinore; and as I intended proceeding to Copenhagen early next morning, I ordered a specimen of Danish cookery with all expedition, that I might visit the castle

before night-fall. Of what my first Danish dinner consisted, I do not recollect; but I know that two hours' labour at the oar, gave it a relish. It was nearly sun-set before I reached the castle.

Walking upon the battlements of the castle of Elsinore, one has the same kind of instinctive expectation of seeing the ghost of the murdered king, as we have of meeting Don Quixote and his Squire while travelling in the Sierra Morena; and indeed, in this ancient Danish fortress, there is no lack of such gloomy archways as a ghost might be supposed to issue from; but I confess, that the prospect from the battlements had more charms for me, than the associations of Elsinore with Shakspeare and Hamlet. The Sound seemed like a broad river: more than a hundred and twenty vessels lay motionless upon its surface, which was not rippled by the slightest breath of air, so that each ship was represented in the water as distinctly, as if it had been propped upon a mirror. The streamers hung idly down by the mast sides. It was a scene of perfect repose, such as Vanderveldt would have chosen for his canvas; once only, a sound disturbed the stillness, but it was an impressive kind of disturbance. At sun-set, the guard-ship fired a cannon. A hollow rumbling boomed far over the sea; and then, the stillness seemed the more profound when it ceased.

Next morning, betimes, I left Elsinore for Copenhagen; but upon this occasion I was not a pedestrian. I hired a vehicle and two horses to conduct me thither; not out of compliment to his majesty the king of Denmark, but because I dislike walking through a flat country,——but I beg here to make a short digression in a new chapter, which I shall entitle

CHAPTER II.

The Insignificance of the Kingdom of Denmark.

EVER since the memorable seizure of the Danish fleet by the naval power of England, it has been impossible to conceive any kingdom more unimportant in the political world, than Denmark.

We all know what mischievous persons the Danes were in the olden times, when they were wont to amuse themselves by making little excursions hither,—laying waste our fair provinces of Northumberland, Durham, Holderness, and others, to the great vexation of our princes of the Heptarchy, and to the grievous detriment of their loving subjects.

But for two or three hundred years past, the Danes have made but little stir, with the exception of that remarkable short era in their history,

when they had the folly to join a league against England,—the only power in Europe which was able, from its great maritime strength, either to protect, or to destroy them. Since then, or at least since the capture of the Danish fleet by Britain, a measure, certainly of doubtful justice, but which the necessitous posture of affairs excused (if indeed, the immutable law of justice can be altered by any circumstances); since that event, I say, Denmark has become utterly insignificant. And how could it be otherwise? For her sins during the war, the allied sovereigns took Norway from her, to give to Sweden; thus depriving her of an extent of territory, which of itself gave her some respectability, and which added a million to her population. Its forests, are a sovereignty of themselves; its fisheries, a state revenue; and besides, Norway possesses several commodious harbours and strongly fortified towns, both inland, and on the sea coast.

Since the spoliation then of Denmark, when the Holy Alliance, with doubtful consistency, took Norway from the *legitimate* monarch of Denmark to give it to the *illegitimate* upstart of Sweden,—since that act, Denmark has become nothing. With the exception of Copenhagen, there is not a town in its dominions so big as York; it has only the little island of Zealand, where its capital is

situated; the still smaller island of Funen; and the greater part of Holstein,—which last portion of territory gives to Denmark continental dominions, without any continental power,—and involves her in continental disputes, without any means of defending her possessions,—for the least considerable among the European states could overrun Holstein in a week. Denmark, as one of the ancient European monarchies, holds no rank whatever. If the king of Denmark were to declare war against England, the Whigs might nevertheless, with the most perfect propriety, object to any augmentation in the army or navy; and if his majesty of Denmark were to declare war against any other European state, the intelligence would not depress the British funds one quarter per cent. There is one distinction, however, possessed by the king of Denmark, which perhaps my readers may not be aware of,—it is, that he sits upon a throne made of ivory.

CHAPTER III.

Copenhagen.

It is hardly possible to conceive a more fertile country than the island of Zealand. The road from Elsinore to Copenhagen, is like an avenue through a gentleman's park. Rows of stately trees border it; much of it lies through fine pasture ground, where herds of cattle and flocks of sheep are grazing; and, as you approach the city, there are large nursery, and fruit, and flower gardens on either side. I did not see, between Elsinore and Copenhagen (a distance of twenty-two miles I believe) one foot of unproductive land; the country has some gentle undulations here and there, but is, upon the whole, extremely level; the villages are very frequent,—there are some gentlemens' seats,—and, both in the appearance of

the houses and of the inhabitants generally, there seemed to me a considerable share of comfort. I arrived at Copenhagen before dinner, and took up my quarters in a French hotel, called the *hotel de la Russie*. I have only one remark to make respecting the hotel. The landlord, who took his place at the head of the *table d'hote*, was one of the most accomplished linguists I have ever met. At his table there were French, Germans, Russians, and English; and he addressed the natives of each country with the most perfect fluency of expression.

There is not much to observe respecting Copenhagen;—being the only large city in the Danish dominions, pains have been taken to make it a fine city. Its architectural edifices are handsome; its streets broad and well built; its bazaar (a large covered building in which goods are exposed), spacious, lofty, and extensive; and its churches elegant. In one of them, is the largest organ in Europe, after that of Haarlem.

The king's palace is about three miles from the capital. I walked thither the first evening after my arrival in Copenhagen. His majesty's gardens, which are fine, are thrown open on certain evenings, for the recreation of the citizens. They were extremely full the evening I was there. A band of military music played in front of the

palace, and his majesty kindly appeared at one of the windows, to the apparent delight of his affectionate subjects, who testified their loyalty in the manner usual upon such occasions. Among the airs played by the band, was *our* "God save the King," during the performance of which I stood with my head uncovered,—not without a feeling of pride in knowing, that I was the subject of a monarch, who rules over an empire the most extensive in the world, and the most powerful,—whose subjects are the most enlightened,—and whose own qualifications are fitting for the extent of his rule.

A PEDESTRIAN JOURNEY

THROUGH THE LEAST FREQUENTED PART OF

THE NETHERLANDS.

THE NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER I.

Giving the Reader an idea of what he may expect.

After a galloping journey from Venice, through Bavaria and the Tyrol, across the Rhine and up the Moselle, I have got to Luxembourgh; the key, as politicians call it, to the Netherlands on the side of France. It is singular enough, that I, who have been in most parts of Europe, should think of writing a journey through the Netherlands, which is just at one's fire-side, not three hundred miles from London, and not two hundred from Paris. But, I apprehend, that the district

of Ardennes is as little known to all who live out of it, and to many who live within it, as the great desert of Zahara. The people of Paris never heard of it,—the people of Brussels, which is not fifty miles distant, never were there,—the people of Liege, have seen it from the tower of the archbishop's palace,—and the people of Luxembourgh, from the ramparts of the castle; but nobody was ever in it, excepting those who were born there, and myself, who am about to give an account of it in this book, which I intend shall serve as an Itinerary to all future travellers,—and be, to those who stay at home, an excellent substitute for a journey thither.

I trust the reader will not suppose, from this introduction, that I am going to treat my subject in a light and flimsy way,—if so, he will speedily find himself in error; I propose to make a topographical, political, commercial, inquisitorial, and sentimental survey of the country,—descanting upon its produce, manufactories, fisheries and jurisprudence; dwelling upon its natural beauties; describing its wonders and miracles,—and largely dilating upon the manners and morals of the inhabitants. I will carry you into the cottages of the mean; you shall sit down at table with me in the chateaux of the nobles; and many a silent wandering we shall have together;

for I will lead you into places so lonely, that it would be sacrilege to break their silence, — and when I shall have brought you safely again among the habitations of men, you may then be permitted to say, how you have been pleased with the journey.

It would be a violation of good breeding were I to say much respecting Luxembourgh, or indeed, any thing at all: for every one knows that it is a strong town, having belonged to God knows how many different masters, and now belonging to nobody, — nominally, indeed, to the Netherlands; but, more truly, to the Holy Alliance, being garrisoned by 4000 Prussians. You also know, I presume, that it contains about 15,000 souls; is so many leagues from Trèves, and so many more from Mayence, and that one drinks Moselle there at three-pence a bottle. More than this, I neither know nor desire to know, — for the Prussian sentinels are provokingly insolent, and the women particularly ill favoured; so, if you please, we shall leave Luxembourgh in possession of the Prussians, and begin our journey.

CHAPTER II.

Containing some Information, which cannot well be dispensed with.

When I said, that this was not to be a flimsy book, and insinuated, that it would contain a vast fund of information, you will be pleased to recollect, that I promised no remarks upon geology, botany, or entomology. As all that I write is my own, — as I steal nothing from others, — it is impossible that I should say any thing upon these matters, seeing that I am myself profoundly ignorant of them. My baggage was, however, only the lighter for my ignorance. I had no occasion for hammers, or tin boxes, or microscopes, — my whole knapsack was not so heavy as a good mineralogical specimen. Before we commence our journey, I wish you to under-

stand precisely where I am. I am leaving the city of Luxembourgh, with my face turned in the direction of north-west, just entering upon Ardennes. Now, I beg you will have the goodness to turn to a map of the Netherlands; one of Prussia or France may serve if you have not the other at hand,—and attend to the geographical description which I am going to give you. You will see in the province of Champagne, in France, a town called Mezières; now run your eye from thence to the town of Dinant, in the Netherlands, situated upon the river Meuse; follow the Meuse down to Liege, and then draw a line to the city of Juliers. From Juliers, draw a line as the crow flies, to the river Moselle, then run up the Moselle to Luxembourgh, and, lastly, return to Mezières, from whence you set out, making a little curve to take Sedan in your way. If you do this, you have fairly drawn your line of circumvallation, and all within it, you may depend upon being Ardennes, whatever the map of France may say to the contrary; for even Napoleon, with all his power, could not, by naming one of his departments Ardennes, and calling parts of Ardennes by other names, convince the inhabitants of those parts that they had changed their place of residence without moving a foot; because the district of Ardennes is not marked out

by conventional lines, but by the nature of its soil, which cannot be changed by the decree even of a despot. Let me add to this description, by way of commentary, that the frontiers of kingdoms are always necessarily barren; because, being uncertain and disputed property, their inhabitants feel the insecurity of their tenure, and hesitate ere they bestow labour and employ capital upon land, which the fondness of crowned heads for the pastime of war, renders so liable to be laid waste. Besides, nations, at first, push their conquests as far as the land is worth having; those opposite do the same; and there is thus left betwixt them, an intermediate space of barren territory belonging to nobody, until increasing population, and the enterprise of man, gradually encroach upon it, and make it necessary to draw an imaginary line of demarcation.

Having now some idea of the situation of Ardennes, you will understand my movements better; and since you have been told that I am fairly out of Luxembourgh, and my path lying north west, you will know what part of the country I am about to traverse.

CHAPTER III.

An October Noon.

The name of each month conveys to my mind a distinct idea. October I always fancy cold; and although November be farther advanced in winter, I figure it less cold and less wintry; but the 24th of October, 1824, the day upon which I left Luxembourgh, was an exception. It was a dull, calm, mild, contemplative sort of day; the heavens were covered with heavy masses of clouds, but streaked and broken; and, as the day wore on, their heaviness was dissipated, and one beautiful mantle of pale curdled clouds stretched from horizon to horizon.

There is a feeling of wonderful independence in the mind, which communicates a springiness to the limbs, as one enters upon a road through

a strange country, in good health, with money in one's pocket, master of the language, with all that one needs in a knapsack, and grasping in the hand a trusty and tried staff. Mine, I would not have exchanged for the king of Abyssinia's sceptre. I cut it in the dominions of the *grand seignor*, upon a September evening, in sight of the dome of *St. Sophia*. Thou beautiful temple! how often have I stood, in the calm of a summer's morning, beneath thy portico, and gazed in mute rapture upon thy multiplied beauties. Proudly thou lookest down upon the city of the last Cæsars; beautiful art thou in the stillness of the morning! when thou liftest thy cupola into the clear air. Beautiful in the evening! when thy gilded minarets are bright in the sunbeams that slant over the sea of Marmora; and beautiful beneath the moonlight! when thy gilded dome is chastened into silver—when thy far-up crescent gleams like the image of a sister planet, and thy lofty columns stand in majestic repose, steeped in the soft light that sleeps among them.

In a journey of this kind I make no itinerary; I neither mark down the names of villages, nor do I know how far one station is from another; I trust to accident, and to the goodness of my limbs! I walk until within an hour or two of sunset, and then stop for the night at the first

house that will receive me. There is something not disagreeable to me in this uncertainty; I like to speculate upon my probable fortunes. I have travelled too much to be incommoded by trifles; and an agreeable surprise balances a hundred inconveniences.

About five miles out of Luxembourgh the road goes over an eminence,—there I paused for a few moments, leaning upon my rose-tree, and gazing in every direction. Behind me rose the town and castle, leaning against the grey sky; to the right and left, villages were pretty thickly scattered, and the country seemed neither sterile nor uncultivated; but, before me, there was nothing but wildness; the road seemed to wind for many miles through fenny land, with patches of woods here and there; and, at the distance of fifteen or twenty miles, hills rose to a considerable elevation. How different are the sensations with which we look back to the yet visible objects which we leave behind us! They embrace the whole range of human feeling: "agony unmixed" —joy unbounded — pain or pleasure in all shades and degrees—or perfect indifference. It is only in this last state of mind that journeying affords perfect pleasure. The mind must be free to exercise itself upon every object that is presented to the senses; neither troubled by sorrow, nor too much

elevated by joy. It is when a lake is the most tranquil, that impressions are the easiest made upon it. It was in this state of mind that I left Luxembourgh; I quitted it without any regret; and yet with no greater satisfaction than the prospect of a new day's journey usually imparts to the traveller; so I jogged merrily on, no way disturbed, and elated only by the consciousness of strength and independence,—my eyes were open to every thing I saw; I had only sixteen miles to walk,—I had abundance of time before night; and, although I anticipated neither ragouts nor turbot, I knew I should have enough to satisfy hunger, besides the welcome which one is sure to meet with at an *auberge*.

All the way to Steinfurth, I met nothing but a drove of swine, and saw nothing worth telling the world about. You must journey very rapidly with me as far as St. Hubert; when we get there, where I remained three months, I shall have leisure to speak of many things; and if you be as little fatigued with my company, as I was there of my own, we shall have reason to be mutually satisfied.

Steinfurth is a wretched little row of mean houses and dunghills; I did not stop a moment in it, but passed right through it towards Arlon, where I proposed spending the night. It was

now about three o'clock; the sun would set at five, and I had but five miles to walk; the sky was brightening up, and, as I went onwards, the long line of clouds lifted itself above the horizon, and the sun sinking lower, emerged upon the blue heavens.

About a mile and a half before reaching Arlon, the road winds through a little dell by the side of a tinkling stream; the scene was beautiful. Precipitous cliffs rose on either side, covered with pine; while lower down, bordering the road and fringing the stream, hazel, and beach, and aspen, contrasted with it their lighter shades. The last touch of autumn's pencil had given to the woods the tints that are only nature's, and which assumed hues more exquisite still, beneath the horizontal rays of the declining sun; while, higher up, the pines stretched darkly over the cliffs,—dark even in sunbeams,—seeming as if they scorned, and drank up the flood of living light that was poured upon them.

However agreeable it is to walk through a strange country on a fine day, yet, one always approaches the resting-place with something of satisfaction; especially if the place has been previously fixed upon, and the task consequently accomplished. You do not see Arlon until you are just upon it; and this I think best, because,

if a place be visible four or five miles off, it seems most unaccountably long before one reaches it,—especially if it happens to stand upon an elevation, and the surrounding country is level. Arlon, I say, cannot be complained of in this respect; for it hides itself most cunningly just behind a jutting rock, that obscures the view of it until, at a sudden turn, you find yourself in it. I feel that I am almost giving to Arlon the importance of a town, whereas it is but one street, and that not a good one either.

When one walks into a town with the intention of spending the night in it, the question arises,—in what *auberge?* unless, indeed, there is only one, in which case much trouble and time are saved; and this leads me to observe, that one half of the life of man is spent in hesitating with regard to the objects which, every hour of the day, are presented for his choice. The moment we awake, the difficulty begins; for we may either get up or lie still; and it continues to harass us until we sleep again,—for in clothing, eating, reading, walking, the multiplicity of objects to choose among, is most perplexing; and more time is wasted in determining what we shall do, than in doing that which we have at last determined to do. But, to return to Arlon, which, indeed, I have not yet entered,—I generally take

a survey in the first place, looking out for the *auberges*, and judging by their exteriors, which interior will suit me the best. At Arlon, however, I walked up one side of the street and down the other side, without descrying any thing in the shape of an *auberge*. Surely, thought I, the inhabitants of Arlon go somewhere to drink Moselle,—and I addressed myself to a woman who was standing at her door, asking her if there was any *auberge* in Arlon. I always address myself to women rather than to men in every difficulty, be it great or small. *Kotesbue* makes the same observation: and I would strenuously counsel every traveller to follow my example,—or Kotesbue's. The woman directed me to a draper's shop, which, she informed me, was also an inn, and kept by a lady; and, in a few minutes, I found myself in a decent parlour, seated by a blazing wood fire, and waited upon by the hostess' daughter, a fine girl of two or three-and-twenty. These are all pleasant things. There are many little arts besides, which tend to increase one's comfort after a day's walk; it would be out of place to speak of them here,—but, I promise, that some day or other I will indite a book, which shall be called "the Pedestrian's Companion," or "Every man His own Pedestrian," or "All Travellers turned Foot Travellers,"

or some such title, and in the manner of Isaac Walton.

I cannot say, that I recollect what I had for supper at Arlon ; I know, however, that I drank a pint of Rhenish, and that I slept sound, and breakfasted upon coffee, of course.

CHAPTER IV.

Being the Chronicle of Solitary Musings upon the Banks of the River Semoy.

THE Semoy is a stream quite to my taste; not dull, and sedgy, and troubled, like many of the English rivers, but pure, and sparkling, and rapid, and rocky; it rises,—I cannot tell exactly where,—but I believe, in Lorraine, and joins the Meuse, whose course ends in the sea. There is a road from Arlon to Neufchateau, by which travellers sometimes go; when I speak of a road in Ardennes, I mean a track fit for a cart, distinguishable from the country on either side, only from the circumstance of there being less grass or heath growing upon it. Neufchateau was not, however, the direction in which I wished to go; I therefore, preferred taking the Semoy for my

guide, and following it down to Chiny. One cannot err in this way. It is better than twenty finger posts, or even than a living monitor, for the stream cannot lose its way.

When I left Steinfurth, I found a path along the bank of the Semoy, which I, of course, followed. I had a pretty long day's journey before me; indeed, I had no means of knowing its length, as it depended much upon the winding of the stream; but as the country was hilly, the stream had but little discretionary power in winding, being forced to keep within the narrow valleys through which it flowed.

I know few better companions of a journey than a stream; its conversation is infinitely varied. Sometimes, it flows swiftly over a pebbly bed, holding a gay prattle all the while; then it gently subsides into a calmer flow, discoursing of graver themes; now and then, it gives over talking, gliding silently along, and leaving one time for meditation; till again, after an interval, the conversation is resumed,—and thus, a constant companionable intercourse is kept up, which may be made both amusing and instructive.

The Semoy, I have said, flows through a succession of narrow valleys towards Chiny, and a foot-path lies along the bank. It is an agreeable sort of country; not, indeed, either beautiful or

sublime, but sweet and pastoral,—and there is much amusement in speculating as to which turn the stream will take, when, at a distance, we see two valleys diverging in opposite directions. At Etale, a little village on the water side, I rested for half an hour, and inquired the distance to Chiny; but no one could tell me. The only information I could obtain, was, that betwixt this village and Chiny, I should find no place to bait at, excepting a little chapel erected for the use of the devout, where I might be refreshed by a sight of the virgin, and two or three saints.

Although the narrowness of the valleys generally forbids the Semoy from indulging in capricious turnings; yet, at times, when a piece of flat meadow land leaves it to its own will, it makes abundant amends for the previous constraint: it becomes a perfect coquette, coming and going without any imaginable cause; now approaching, and now suddenly retreating; bestowing its visits and its smiles, now upon one side of the valley, and now upon the other; and in short, playing so capricious apart that one gets angry with it.

After walking an hour or two, I arrived at the little chapel. The virgin and child, and a couple of saints, whose names I forget, were there in readiness to answer all prayers for blessings likely to be granted; but as I had no request to

make that was pressing, I dropped a trifle into the *boite des pauvres*, and passed on. I do not know any resting place more agreeable than the margin of a stream,—so I sat down upon the bank, a little farther on, just at the gorge of a narrow valley, where the channel of the river became impeded by rocks, and where its talking rose into high words, seemingly in the way of remonstrance. I pulled 'Paul and Virginia' from my pocket,—I had purchased it at Inspruck, or rather exchanged 'Corinne' for it, which had been my companion for some months previously. One may in this way, vary one's reading from Calais to Constantinople, and from Constantinople to Calais, without either making the baggage heavier or the purse lighter. One rule only must be kept in view, to begin with the most valuable book,—because in every exchange, something of the value must be conceded, and one might otherwise be obliged in the end, to make a companion of 'Cock Robin,' or *l'Histoire du petit Joseph et son chat.*

After sitting for a while upon the turf, sometimes looking into my book, but oftener, in that dreamy state of mind, when fancy takes the mental reins,—I continued my journey towards Chiny. A few miles before getting there, the banks become less intrusive, and the river mean-

ders over flat meadows bounded by green hills. Oh! it was a gentle scene,—solitary, but not sad; for the sides of the hills were spotted with sheep, and on the edge of the meadow, the cattle were stooping to the clear water; and the shepherds were singing mountain airs; and the flocks were bleating, and the herds lowing; and then there was the merry mill-clack, and the merry faces of the miller and his wife, and the children playing before the door.

CHAPTER V.

Chinon—Some information with regard to Champagne—A Digression upon Trade and Taxes, and an illustrative Story.

"MONSIEUR, *est-ce qu'on tient ici un auberge?*" said I, to a jolly-looking man, standing at the door of a two-storied house, whereat a bunch of grapes was hanging over the door. Being answered in the affirmative, I entered, and was ushered into a large room, with a stove in it red hot; a table was in the middle of the room, upon which the hostess and a servant were laying the cloth. This augured well,—and yet, it could hardly be for supper, at five o'clock; but the innkeeper was *Monsieur le Comptrolleur* also, and having been out on horseback all day, collecting cess, he had come home hungry, and fortunately wanted his

supper. It soon "smoked upon the board," and consisted of a *haricot* of mutton extremely savoury, of which we partook together, — and we then shared a bottle of champagne. When I speak of champagne in Ardennes, or in the neighbouring provinces of France, I do not mean the white champagne or the rosy champagne, contained in long-necked bottles, for which one pays six or seven francs in Paris, and sixteen or seventeen in London. I mean, neither sparkling champagne nor still champagne, as they are understood by the *bon vivant* of either capital. I mean, the common wine of the province of Champagne; the *vin du Pays*, which is sent neither to Paris nor to London, but is drank in the provinces where it is made. It is not a bad wine, — about as good as ordinary burgundy, and as cheap. Bitterly did the host complain that, by a late ordinance of his majesty the king of the Netherlands, French wine had been prohibited from being imported into his dominions except by sea. — "Now, really," said he, "after the wine has been sent from Champagne to Paris, and from Paris to Havre, and from Havre to Antwerp, and from Antwerp to Chiny, one would require to be as rich as the king himself to drink it."

Of all the governments I have ever seen, that of the Netherlands is the most unpopular. There

are many causes for this. The manners, habits, and predilections of all the southern part of the kingdom are eminently French. The genius and character of the inhabitants of Limbourg, of the provinces of Namur, Liege, Luxembourgh, and the whole of Ardennes, are quite opposed to those of the inhabitants of Holland, and the Dutch Netherlands; so that, for this reason alone, these provinces would prefer a union with France to their own government. The southern provinces have this additional ground of complaint; that there is no free trade with France. This, as far as regards the exportation of their bestial, is a serious evil,—for Ardennes is not a country that will produce much corn,—and it grows no grape; but is admirably fitted for rearing cattle, and sheep, and pigs. The sheep of heathy and mountainous countries are invariably the most esteemed, and the forests of oak afford excellent nourishment for their pigs, whose flesh is sweeter when fed upon acorns than upon any thing else. The Low Countries, again, have to complain of the commercial advantages enjoyed by the English; which they attribute, probably with justice, to the partiality of a monarch for a people to whom he owes his crown. But, besides these grounds for the unpopularity of the government, the system of taxation is oppressive and inqui-

sitorial. They have house duty, and window duty, and hearth duty, and many other taxes bearing heavily upon the poor. The most oppressive of them all, however, is the tax which is laid upon the actual consumption of articles of sustenance. Until you have actually eaten your pig, it cannot be said to be your own; not, at all events, until it is roasting. Your corn is not yours, although you have bought it, and paid for it. Before one is at liberty to kill a pig in the Netherlands, the king's permission must be obtained; and for this, half-a-crown is paid. An ox, of course, pays proportionally more; and, before you dare grind your corn, you must also pay a certain tax to his majesty. I have frequently seen persons in the Netherlands obliged to eat potatoes, because they could not pay for his majesty's permission to turn their corn into flour!

"You have killed a calf, I understand, last week, without making a return to government?"—said one of two excise officers, who came to the house of a certain merchant at Dinant,—a man of some humour, fond of a joke, but not at all fond of this tax—"we must search the house." "Assuredly you shall," said the merchant, who expected the visit, "walk in;—you see," said he, entering a room, "I was employed in rocking the cradle when you arrived, as my wife is from home;—

while I go and shew the house to one of you gentlemen, perhaps the other would have the kindness to rock the cradle?" "Certainly," said the principal officer, "I will stay here until your return." So the exciseman and the merchant went to search for the dead calf, and the other exciseman remained to rock the cradle. "I have found no part of a calf," said the exciseman to his brother officer, as he re-entered with the merchant. "Our information must have been erroneous, then," said the other, about to leave his post; "we have the honour of wishing you good morning, sir." "I beg you will accept of my thanks," said the merchant, "for the trouble you have had in rocking the cradle; but, before you go, only look what a sweet charge you have had." The exciseman approached; the merchant drew aside the covering, and exhibited *a quarter of a dead calf!* The merchant willingly paid the tax, to have had the pleasure of making a government officer rock a quarter of veal in place of an infant.

The host, at Chiny (with whom I have been all this while drinking champagne), came to the conclusion, that the king of the Netherlands was, — I shall not say what. I have, some how or other, a respect for the kingly character; and I have always considered it a mark of extreme bad

taste in my countrymen abroad, not to lift their hats from their heads when a king passes by; my respect for royalty carries me that length,—and I should take off my hat to a king in his own dominions, were they no bigger than my grandfather's cabbage garden.

CHAPTER VI.

From Chiny to St. Hubert—Basse Bras—Forest Scenery

I FORGOT, in the last chapter, to say any thing about Chiny; I shall dispatch it in a few words. It is small, tolerably clean, and walled round; it was formerly a place of importance, and is now of none. It contains a church, of course, which contains pictures of some saints, and relics of others,—all equally valuable. This, I think, may suffice for Chiny.

The morning I left Chiny, the sky looked gloomy and somewhat threatening; however, I did not allow this to prevent my progress. From Chiny to St. Hubert there is a road, into which the host conducted me. He said, it was seven

leagues to St. Hubert, and that it was impossible to lose my way. The first part of this day's journey was through hill and valley; woods stretching up the side of every hill, and torrents dashing through every valley. It is next to impossible to find one's road in Ardennes; for sometimes they branch off in a dozen different directions at one spot, every cottage having its road to it. In toiling up a hill, I overtook a well-dressed man, with whom I entered into conversation,—he was well read in politics, and descanted with much confidence upon the state of Europe; his own country he called Malheureux, and he ascribed its wretchedness to the English. My companion was going to Recogne, a village about two leagues from Chiny, where he resided, in some inferior employment in the excise. When we got to the village, he insisted upon my accompanying him to his house, and partaking of a bottle of Moselle, and some *gruyère*. Notwithstanding the direction which I received from my entertainer at parting, I soon got off my road, and had to make my way through marshes and thick woods as I was best able;—a sort of *cairn*, however, upon a hill, which I kept in sight, and near to which I had been told the road passed, brought me into it again.

After passing the little village of Basse Bras,

I came to a singularly picturesque situation; the road does not go along a valley, but across a valley of extreme depth. It descends a hill not much removed from the perpendicular, and ascends the opposite hill, which is equally steep. Betwixt them flows the river L'Homme, dark and turbulent; a half-ruined stone bridge joins them. About half a mile below the bridge, a cliff rises to the height of four or five hundred feet, and upon the top of it, stands the chateau de Coufei, one of the largest and finest in Ardennes; while round it, and beyond it, is one continuous forest. Above the bridge, the river leaves in the middle of it, spiral wooded rocks, at least two hundred feet high, and dashes furiously betwixt them, presenting a perfect example of the picturesque.

When I had ascended the opposite hill, nothing but forest appeared before me, and I was soon inclosed in it. It was the great forest of St. Hubert, more than forty miles in circumference. I had to walk about ten miles through it, before arriving at the town of St. Hubert. It is not like the woods which one is accustomed to in England, stretching over plains, or the sides of hills. It incloses within it, every diversity of hill and dale, —deep ravines, wide valleys, rocky steeps, high hills, rivers, streams, and lakes; presenting a

combination of the most striking and diversified scenery. I trod upon a carpet of the greenest velvet; the long arms of the jagged pine or the branching oak, occasionally met overhead, while here and there, the trees receded, and formed little amphitheatres of surpassing beauty; sometimes, the path descended into a deep dell—sometimes it climbed abrupt precipices—brooks frequently obstructed its progress; often with no bridge over them, and at times, with one formed of the trunks of trees. Sometimes at the opening of a forest vista, a deer would bound across; sometimes, at sudden turnings, little animals of the ferret tribe, would be seen for an instant; and then heard rustling through the thick brushwood. I have seldom enjoyed a walk more; and notwithstanding the fatiguing nature of the road, I got through the forest sooner than I desired.

In the middle of the forest, there is a clear space, five or six miles round, consisting of heathy hill and valley, in the centre of which stands the town; and the lofty towers of its magnificent church, I descried immediately upon getting out of the forest. I had inquired at Chiny, which was the head inn at St. Hubert; and had been directed to the *Hotel du Pays bas, tenu par M. Coutelier.* This sounds as if St.

Hubert were a place of note, whereas it is a ——. But the title of this chapter is "from Chiny to St. Hubert," so I can have no right to say a word about St. Hubert, until I begin a new chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

St. Hubert; its Church and Relics—The Author displays his Graphic powers.

ST. HUBERT is a miserable little place, notwithstanding its splendid church, and that it is the reputed capital of Ardennes. It consists of three streets, containing some tolerable houses; for, being the seat of the supreme judicature, there are judges and lawyers of all kinds, and a *Procureur du roi*, a sort of petty attorney-general, and an inspector, and sub-inspectors of the royal forest; and a burgomestre, and a comptroller, &c. &c., and as each of these great men must have a two-storied house, the appearance of the streets is not absolutely contemptible. The church is a large, and rather fine structure, both without and within, built

by some German, and dedicated to St. Hubert, a saint, not I think in very high repute elsewhere. But, however small the reputation which this saint enjoys in other places, he well merits the good opinion and devotional exercises of the people of St. Hubert. It is really delightful to be a saint; for a saint can benefit a town at so easy a rate;—some men found hospitals; others endow schools; but a saint has only to leave a box, with his nail pairings, to any town he selects, and he enriches it for ever. It is not by its silk manufactures, or any other kind of manufactures, that Cologne exists, but by the pairings of St. Anastasius' beard.

I wish I could give you some accurate idea of St. Hubert; because as I resided there three months,—making excursions to the neighbouring marvels, villages, forest, &c., and had occasion to walk out of the town, and into the town, almost every day during that time, I am anxious that you should be in a condition to accompany me, and be able to distinguish between north, south, east and west, so as to comprehend every circumambulation that I made. In these circumstances, some travellers would have recourse to a plan or map; but as I am no engineer, or land surveyor, and have a desire to finish my book at the expense of nothing but the

tear and wear of my own wits, I will endeavour by dint of mere words, to make you as intimately acquainted with St. Hubert, as if you had been sextons and bell-ringers in it from the hour of your birth. If I were an expert writer of travels, this would be no difficult task: I have looked into some travellers' note-books, from which, most commendable narratives have afterwards been printed. This for example, might be a leaf from a note-book.

"Inspruck, Austrian dom: pleasant sit: upon river Inn,—walled,—8,000 souls,—two gates, north and south,—three churches; St. Barnabas, St. Bridget, and St. Thomas." And from these notes, we afterwards read—

"Inspruck is a town belonging to his majesty the emperor of Austria,—it stands in a pleasant situation upon the river Inn. It is a fortified town, and has two gates at opposite extremes, fronting north and south. It contains about 8,000 inhabitants, and is adorned by three noble churches; St. Bridget, St. Barnabas, and St. Thomas." Now, after reading a description of this kind, I am no wiser—it presents no picture to me. I should not, from this description, know Inspruck if I saw it; and neither would you. The reader ought, from a description, to be enabled to picture to himself the thing described,—if a description fails to do

this, it does nothing. Let me try if I cannot give you a clearer description of St. Hubert.

Figure to yourself a forest, about forty miles round; and in the midst of the forest, a clear round space, about two miles in diameter; this space, not a flat, nor lying horizontally, but consisting of two rising grounds, lying east and west, and a stream running betwixt them in the same direction. Upon the slope of one of these rising grounds lies the town; one street runs north and south: this is the principal street: it is wide, the houses of unequal height, and the pavement such, that in rainy weather, a child might be drowned in the pools that stand in the causeway. One end of this street runs into the road to Luxembourgh, ascending the elevation; and by the other end is the way to Namur, declining to the stream I have spoken of, and crossing it by an old stone bridge. About half-way along this street, there is an opening in the line of houses; and back from the line, about one hundred feet, stands the church, forming one side of a square; the other sides being the court-house, town-hall, and judges'-houses, &c. In the midst of this square, is a well, or fountain, where the damsels go to draw water,—and just opposite to this well, and therefore fronting the church, is the head inn I have already mentioned.

Besides this street, there is another: suppose that you had walked down this street towards the stream; just before you get to it, another street branches off to the left or west side, running parallel with the stream. This is a narrow street, but is of some consequence, nevertheless; for Madame the post-mistress, and Monsieur the inspector-general of the royal forest, reside in it; these are all the streets that the inhabitants of St. Hubert have the liberty to walk in. The elevations on both sides of the town are covered with heath, excepting just behind the streets, where there is a row of gardens,—and along the stream, all the way through the little valley, are thickly-growing stunted oaks. Now, if you are not qualified from this description, to walk with me on the Luxembourgh road, or on the Namur road,—to go to church,—to call upon the inspector of the forests and ask for a day's shooting,—or to put a letter in the post-office, and find your way back to the *hotel des Pays bas;* I profess I can do no more for you—my graphic powers are exhausted.

CHAPTER VIII.

Containing the Speculations of the good People of St. Hubert; and a Dialogue between the Author and the King's Attorney-General.

WERE I to tell truly, all the wonderment which my arrival at St. Hubert occasioned there, and not there only, but throughout all the province, my veracity would certainly be doubted. I am convinced, that the arrival of the king of Tombuctoo and all his court in London, would not create half the sensation that mine did at St. Hubert. "Who is he?" "What is he?" "Is he an *Anglais?*" "Is he a true, genuine, *veritable Anglais?*" "Is he an Ecossais?" "He is not an Ecossais, for he wears breeches." There was evidently a stagnation in all the ordinary employments; the shop-keepers leant upon their

counters, and conversed in whispers with their customers; the letters were an hour later in being delivered than usual; for Madame the post-mistress, immediately upon learning the intelligence, put on her cloak and bonnet, and went to take tea with Madame the wife of the lieutenant of police. At each of the three inns, more Moselle and brandy were drunk, than had been known since the keeper of the head inn ran off with the burgomestre's wife; the judges broke up the court earlier than usual; and adjourned, together with the principal law officers, to the Wheat Sheaf, where they drank, each man, his bottle and a half of Burgundy,—and in the evening, the burgomestre saw a select party of the municipal and law authorities, where the affair was fully discussed, and it was determined in consequence, that the *Procureur du roi* (the attorney-general of Luxembourgh), should send for the stranger to interrogate him. An express too, was sent to the governor at Luxembourgh, to apprise him of the event. All this is not, however, so extraordinary; for, certain it is, that no one at St. Hubert had ever seen an Englishman. I was standing in the inn, the third day after my arrival, while the girl was laying the cloth for dinner—she suddenly stopped her work, and addressing me, said, "*Mais Monsieur, etez vous vraiment un Anglais?*" and upon my assuring

her that I was, she continued to look at me for some moments, as I should look at an inhabitant of *Terra del Fuègo*. The result of the consultation at the house of the burgomestre was, that the *Procureur du roi* should send for me; and accordingly, the intelligence that this great man desired to see me, was communicated to me next morning by the hotel-keeper, who could not conceal his alarm in having harboured in his house one, who had attracted the notice of the law authorities. I of course obeyed the summons, and found the king's advocate in a small room, full of papers and books. A police officer in uniform was in the passage, and the gentleman himself was seated in a large arm chair, when I was ushered in. He rose, and bowed, and sat down; I bowed and sat down also. "Pray sir," said he, "what is your object in visiting St. Hubert?" "Curiosity; a desire to see it," I replied. "Are you not in commerce?" demanded he. "No." "Nothing else than curiosity brings you here?" "Nothing else." "You don't meddle in politics?" "No, unless having my opinions as all my countrymen have, be called meddling in politics?" "Your opinions, such as they are, are favourable to the government, I suppose?" "So long," I replied, "as my actions are those of a peaceable citizen, no one has a right to interrogate

me as to my opinions." "It is strange," said he, "that you should come to a place so much out of the way (*hors du monde*), as St. Hubert; you must have an object." "I have already told you my object is curiosity." "You have a *passeport*, of course?" "If I had had a *passeport*," said I, "I should not have submitted to be questioned so inquisitorially." "What," said he, "no *passeport*?" "None!" said I. "Where is it?" demanded he; "you must have had one on leaving your own country." "In my own country," said I, "no one requires a *passeport* either to travel within it, or to go out of it; we have a good government, and therefore it fears neither traitors nor spies." "But had you not a *passeport* from France?" said he. "Yes," said I, "but I came from Paris with a friend; both names were contained in the same *passeport*; he has remained at Luxembourgh, and is going back to Paris, and therefore, requires a *passeport*,—and I have here a certificate from the commissary of police, by which you will see, that I had a *passeport* from Paris, and that I have conducted myself unexceptionably (*comme bon citoyen*) since coming into your country,—I thought," added I, "that this strictness had been confined to the governments of the Holy Alliance, and to France; and of all the people in the world, the English, I think

ought to meet with countenance and protection in your country, for reasons which I need not inform you of."

I now got up, saying, that I supposed I was not further wanted,—but my gentleman was irritated. "I have no power," said he, "to countenance any stranger without a *passeport*; I must report the circumstance." "The fault, Sir," said I, "lies in the regulations of your own government: your ambassador at Paris, signed my *passeport*, in which were two names, thus giving us leave to travel into the Netherlands; at Luxembourgh, your commissary would not divide the *passeport*, giving me one to proceed, and my friend another to go back; so that by your regulations, if two persons set out upon a journey, they must never separate, until they return to where they departed from." To this he replied nothing; but took out of his desk, a sheet of paper officially marked, upon which he wrote certain heads, and then gave it to me to fill up. The following are its contents, as nearly as I can recollect.

Query. Name?
Answer. So and so.
Q. Profession?
A. None.

Q. Means of living?

A. *Mon argent et mon esprit.*

Q. Political opinions?

A. Attached to every government that merits respect.

Q. Object in visiting Ardennes?

A. Curiosity.

Q. Time of your departure?

A. When curiosity is satisfied.

Q. Your destination when you leave it?

A. Uncertain.

Q. Occupation while here?

A. Walking—writing—reading—observing—eating—drinking—hunting.

Q. Persons in the Netherlands who know you.

A. Nobody.

"And this," said he, "is your account of yourself!" "This," said I, "is my reply to your questions." "When I receive an answer," said he, "I shall send for you again." "*Monsieur, j'ai l'honneur de vous souhaiter bien bon jour.*" "*Monsieur,*" said he, and bowed,—and I walked out.

All this absurd proceeding, I attributed at the time, to the ignorance and littleness of those

concerned in it. I have since found, however, that the government of the Netherlands differs from those of the *league*, only in the less power which it possesses.

CHAPTER IX.

I HAVE given no head to this chapter, which, being a departure from my established custom, I must needs tell the reason of. The fact is, it contains so many things, although but little of each, that to have given the reader the slightest idea of what he had to expect, would have furnished of itself matter for a chapter; unless, indeed, some single word could have been hit upon to express the whole, or even to express that the whole could not be expressed—*olla podrida*, perhaps; but these being words pertaining to a foreign tongue, would not have suited a work whose chief excellence consists in its being pure Saxon; so that all these matters being weighed, I found it most advisable to allow Chapter IX. the exclusive honour of having no interpreter.

I think I had, at the conclusion of the last chapter, left the *Procureur du roi*, and taken my road to the inn: when I arrived there, I found all the house in commotion; an *avant courier* had just arrived, bringing the important intelligence, that *Monsieur* the *Baron de Jaumblinne*, a great noble; and *Monsieur* the Baron, his brother, another great, though lesser noble; and *Monsieur le Comte de Rosen Haren*, a mightier than either, were on their way to the identical *hotel des Pays bas*, carrying with them a royal permission to hunt in his majesty's forest, and to proclaim a crusade, in the name of the king, against wolves and boars; and, moreover, that these barons were to be accompanied, or at least drawn thither by three horses, requiring accommodation and entertainment; and that two servants and three dogs were also to be of the train; and giving notice, that an abundant supper was expected for barons, servants, horses, and dogs, that same evening. Only judge of the commotion which this announcement must have produced in the *hotel des Pays bas*. My importance was not however sensibly affected by it; for barons did come occasionally, but Englishmen, never; and besides, I had fairly passed the ordeal of my trial, and had returned a free man from the *Procureur du roi*; from which circumstance, *Mon-*

sieur Coutelier naturally conjectured, that I was a *veritable Anglais*, and no spy.

There was such a confusion however, and such a running up stairs and down stairs, and such a Babelish noise of tongues, that I thought it best to retire for a few hours, and walk into the neighbourhood, to earn an appetite for this baronial supper, which *Monsieur Coutelier* assured me I should be expected to partake of.

There is a wonderful difference in the temperature of St. Hubert, and of places at but a very little distance from it. It frequently happens, that snow lies four or five feet deep around St. Hubert, and that not a flake has fallen at Rochfort, not fifteen miles distant. When I got upon the heath, I found the temperature of the air exceedingly different from its temperature at Chiny; it had the feeling that betokens a fall of snow; and, indeed, the lowering sky had every appearance of it. It was only the 16th of October; but in Ardennes, at least at St. Hubert, winter often sets in earlier.

Most landscapes have features of common resemblance,—hill and dale, or plains, wood, water, cottages; but there is something unusual in the look of the country around St. Hubert; the horizon, so contracted,—bounded on every side by a forest,—the desolate, heathy, bare ground

immediately around,—above all, the princely towers of the church of St. Hubert, so little in unison with the wretched village that surrounds it,—all present an uncommon appearance, and seemed to me, different from any thing I had ever seen before. There was a dull look over every thing; no sunshine—no wind,—a shrouded sky—a chill, raw air—and a dead stillness. I felt a depression; it was the lag end of the season; the approaching death of nature; all seemed prepared, as if waiting the arrival of the desolating blast of winter. A feeling too came over my mind, which, before and since, I have often felt—the feeling of utter loneliness: it is a chilling sensation. If I were to wish evil to an enemy, it would be to feel himself alone in the world: for a time indeed, man may sympathize with external nature; but it is a species of sympathy which cannot long fill up the voids of existence, unless to a jaundiced mind. Oh! it is human sympathy that is alone worth living for—it is human affection that can alone fill the heart. Solitude! I have been thy worshipper: I have wandered on the desolate shores of inhospitable lands; I have laid me down in solitary places, in the deep valley, and on the dark mountain; I have paused in the still forest, and nature and my spirit have held communings together; and

I have said, "why is there no haven for me,—and why is it, that I have found no sympathy, but with external nature?" and then, I have wept, and been silent, and wandered on.

CHAPTER X.

Setting forth the Author's theory of Love of Country.

NATIONALITY is quite distinct from love of country; I have no quarrel with the common definition of nationality, which I take to be, the pride which one feels in the greatness, or character of one's own nation; but it is of love of country that I wish to say a few words.

It is generally supposed, that love of country, is the love of the soil,—of the material substance which composes one place rather than another. But this idea is a mistaken one: the soil of one place is loved no more than the soil of another place; if the sentiment be sifted to the bottom, it will be found invariably, that it is human associations that give to every place its only value. A man goes to revisit the place of his birth; and

when he feels a stirring within him at the sight of his native valley, or even of a well known brook, or a remembered bush, he fancies that he has an affection for these; but let him search a little deeper, and analyse his feelings more accurately, and he will perceive how erroneous is this supposition. The vale—the brook--the bush —are loved, only as they are full of human recollections,—the endearments of infancy, the plays of childhood, and the companions of those plays, —the enchantments of youth, and those who made the enchantment. Nor is love of country. taken in a wider acceptation, any thing else than the love of persons. I do not speak from the recesses of my study,—I speak from places far from my native land,—I speak from the bosom of the ocean, as it heaves me in sight of my native cliffs. These,—says the returning traveller,—these are my native hills! And a shout from the strong hearted, and a tear from the tender, testify alike the feelings of the soul. But, it is not the cliffs, nor the meadows, nor the gardens, nor the habitations of that land, that we must look to as the foundation of these feelings. They are associated with those whose presence has hallowed such scenes,—those, who may hallow them again.

This feeling of supposed attachment to a place

may exist out of one's own country, as well as in it; and, it is then, that the sentiment will seem most disunited from human association; but it may be traced to this under every circumstance. Let me suppose an extreme case. One has lived, perhaps, in some spot remote from one's own land,—some desolate spot,—and lived in it alone. Now, there are many persons who, if they should at any after time pass within a considerable distance of that place, would go to visit it, and feel pleasure in the visit. But, they would probably ascribe the pleasure they might receive to a wrong cause. They would imagine, that they had contracted an affection for the place,—and they might say, seemingly with reason, "I lived here in solitude,—there can be no association with persons,—therefore, it must be the place itself that attracts me." But, although there was no society there, the place may not the less be associated with human beings. In such a spot, perhaps, he who dwelt there was in the habit of giving up his thoughts to dreams of the past, or anticipations of the future,—dreams and anticipations whose charm, whether the charm of melancholy or of joy, had been born of human affections, and human sympathy; and when he revisits that spot,—that desolate abode, where he had lived alone, it is nevertheless peopled with beings who

have lived there with him, in fancy, and been the companions of his hours on the wide heath, or in the still valley—and thence comes the pleasure which he finds in revisiting it. And is not this sentiment, which I have traced to human sympathy, better and more worthy, than that which is denominated nationality? which is only a sympathy with a thing which men call glory; or oftener still, nothing but a stock of illiberal prejudices, which blind men's proper judgment, rendering them contemptible in the eyes of all wise men, and ridiculous in the eyes of every one whose country is different from their own. If I be right in my analysis, I desire to be thought a lover of my country; if I am wrong, I gladly leave to others the distinction of the name; I shall seek for some other term to express what I am myself.

CHAPTER XI.

Arrival of the Nobles—A little information to the English, &c. &c.

It was about five o'clock when I returned from my ramble. Not many minutes afterwards, the pavement of the street of St. Hubert was disturbed by the rattle of a carriage, which could, of course, be none other than that conveying the barons. A noise, however, far greater than this, arose from another cause. All the dogs of St. Hubert are, as might be expected, acquainted with one another,—either on speaking terms or bowing acquaintance; at all events, known to each other by sight,—so that the arrival of three strange dogs occasioned full as much astonishment among the dogs, as the arrival of the barons did among their masters! with this important difference,

however in feeling,—that the astonishment of the town's-people was mingled with pleasure, inasmuch as many of them saw in it a chance of profit to themselves; whereas the canine race,—ancient burgesses of the town,—saw nothing but intrusion in the arrival of three large shaggy dogs, and nothing but bad manners in the growling in which they indulged, at seeing so large a conclave of dogs and curs of all kinds and dimensions assembled to make observations upon them. The growling came to barking, and the barking to blows,—and the three strangers were roughly handled before they got shelter with their masters in the *hotel des Pays bas.*

The three barons were fair specimens of Netherlands' noblemen. These rank in manners and information with the English country squires, whom we read of as having flourished in the middle of the eighteenth century. I have had numerous opportunities, since being at St. Hubert, of meeting and visiting with the nobles of the *Pays bas;* and I think they cannot be considered at all upon a par, either in knowledge or breeding, with Englishmen of the middle classes. Neither can I perceive any distinction between the nobles, and the mercantile and manufacturing classes, in the Netherlands, unless in two things: in pride, which is more conspicuous among the

former; and in information, which is more plentiful among the latter. There is one qualification, however, for which the nobles of the Netherlands are abundantly conspicuous,—that is, hospitality; and this more in Ardennes, and in the least frequented parts of the Netherlands, than in those best known to the English.

I cannot here resist the temptation of giving to the travelling English, a little important information. English travellers know absolutely nothing of the Netherlands: neither as a country abounding in natural beauties; nor, as presenting in some districts, a state of almost primeval manners. With regard to the first,—few, before leaving home, are aware that there are any natural beauties in the Netherlands; and, therefore, their route is not made to include the districts where these exist. The English traveller believes the Netherlands to be a low country (as indeed, the name denotes), producing corn,—intersected by canals; containing the cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, and a few others,—famous for specimens of Flemish painting, and still more famous on account of its connexion with Waterloo. The world is favoured with picturesque tours, on the banks of the Rhine, and the Loire, and on the banks of many other rivers. But, it is rarely that travellers to the Netherlands ever mention

the Meuse; because, indeed, few of them ever see it; and yet, in beauty and diversity of scenery, it excels the Rhine, and is not inferior to the Loire. You shall walk along its banks with me by and by.

Travellers to the Netherlands make out a route including the cities I have mentioned, and comprehending Waterloo; and either pass to Aix la Chapelle, if Germany be their destination, crossing the Meuse at Maestricht perhaps, where it has degenerated into a mere Dutch river; or they go to Paris by Valenciennes, or Mons,—and thus leave the Netherlands under the same misconception with which they entered it; fancying it to be a flat rich country, full of canals, very populous, containing many large fortified towns, and fine churches, and capital pictures by *Rubens*, *Teniers*, and others. But, that there is a great part of it mountainous, thickly wooded, thinly peopled, intersected by fine rapid rivers and innumerable rocky streams, over-run by wolves and wild boars, and presenting every feature of picturesque beauty, they know not, and would find some difficulty in crediting.

With regard to the manners of the country, the English traveller takes his judgment from those of the inhabitants of Brussels. He imagines, that the Flemish are now almost English;

and, indeed, this idea is sufficiently natural,—for, at Brussels, the only natives with whom the English meet, are as much English as they are Flemish; the English are the fashion at court, and therefore—the fashion out of court. The king is an Englishman,—so is the prince,—so are all the courtiers; and in all fashionable society (which is, indeed, only the court society, as is the case in all trifling States), English fashions are preferred, and the English themselves heaped with civilities. I can give you an example of this. A ball, or rather a quadrille party, was to be given at court; and, as a compliment to the English, it was determined, that the dancers should appear representing the characters in *Ivanhoe*. As a further compliment, all the dancers were English except one,—and, a higher compliment than either,—the English had alone the permission of the private *entreé*. No wonder the English flock to Brussels; masters and misses have the *entreé* at court,—and many a one in Brussels keeps the company of kings and princes, who, at home, could hardly hope to make up a quadrille party in Russel-square, or Gower-street.

The English, therefore, who go to Brussels, and who occasionally meet the Flemish at court, judge by what they see, and fancy they know the manners of the upper ranks; but they are mistaken,

—they know only their assumed manners. The Flemish nobles, who reside in Brussels, imitate the English indeed,—but they dislike them; and an Englishman will find it ten times more difficult to sit down at the table of a Flemish nobleman in his own chateau, than to banquet with king William, or dance with the princess of Orange. There is no country in Europe, where prejudices against the English are so strong as they are in the Netherlands; and those who reside in the capital, and witness, every day, the partiality evinced by the king for his English residents, have their prejudices every day strengthened. It is only in the remote parts of the Netherlands, that these prejudices are weak, because they are not fed. It is there only, that the national manners remain pure, and can be judged of; and it is only there, that the English are received cordially into the family circle of the natives.

CHAPTER XII.

The Baronial Supper.—A short Digression upon writing Travels from memory.

THE count and the two barons, the burgomestre, the comptroller, and the author (by special invitation) and the inn-keeper (as a matter of right), sat down to supper. Now, to say any thing of Netherlands' suppers may appear absurd, since so many hundred travellers have eaten of them; but then it must be recollected, that Ardennes' suppers, are not Brussels' suppers, nor indeed, such as one meets with out of that district. It was to-night, that for the first time, I tasted wild boar; a delicacy even where wild boars abound. It is impossible to describe a taste, unless by likening it to some other taste,—but I know of no taste resembling that of wild boar; if, however, I were

called upon to say, what taste it differs from the most, I should say, tame pig. We had it dressed in three different ways. Even were I competent to describe the manner of dressing it, it would be useless where wild boar cannot be had. This formed the supper, together with two large dishes of *ecrivisse* (craw fish, or miniature lobster), and vegetables. Next day, the hunt was to be proclaimed; and the day after, it was to take place —consequently the conversation turned almost wholly upon the chase; and the songs, of which many were sung, were naturally hunting songs. One pretty one I recollect, and have often hummed since; it begins, *Vivent les chasseurs.*

Writing a book of travels from notes, and writing a book from memory, are tasks entirely different. Notes are like mile-stones and finger-posts, they help one on; we see distinctly the progress we make. They are direction-posts to the mind; they place something before it, and it has only to expand ideas presented to it; the book may be written at any time, because there is always something to write about; the notes are lying upon the table;—here, I left off; and here, I have to recommence: but writing from memory is quite a different thing; one must be in the humour, in this case; we do not write because we are sat down to write,—but we sit down to write

because we feel an inclination to write,—and it often happens, that after writing an hour or two, no sensible progress has been made. We left Ratisbon some hours ago, and we have hardly got past the outer moat yet. In writing from notes, as soon as all has been said regarding a town, that is meant to be said, one scratches the pen through that town, the traveller leaves it, and there is an end of it: but in writing without notes, there is no curb upon the fancy; when walking upon the ramparts of Ingolstadt, we see the Danube; and perhaps write one chapter about its source, and another about its mouths, with infinite digressions by the way, and then come back to Ingolstadt: but the methodical traveller does no such thing; Ingolstadt is put down here; but the Danube is two pages of notes farther on. This is a short chapter; the reason is, I have no notes, and cannot tell what to write about next.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Walk in the Forest.

It is, I think, a thousand to one, against your ever having walked in a forest; this will, therefore be an interesting chapter, since you are going to read of what you have never read before. Do not suppose that you have walked in a forest, because you have strolled in the neighbourhood of Windsor, or been romantic in the woods that skirt the Wye, or embosom Tintern; you will speedily perceive the difference.

After breakfasting upon boar again, and cheese and bread, and coffee, and brandy, I felt an inclination to devote a day to a forest ramble, and I was soon in its recesses, seated upon a mossy stone, in a deep dell, upon the margin of a very small "hidden brook," that to the sleeping woods

sung "its quiet tune." I know of no lines in English poetry, more beautiful than those of Mr. Coleridge, from whom I quote—

> Like the noise of a hidden brook
> In the leafy month of June,
> That to the sleeping woods, all night
> Singeth a quiet tune.

It was not, however, "the leafy month of June," but the beginning of November,—when nature wears a different garb; and when the sympathies she awakens, are essentially distinct. For my own part, I prefer nature in her drooping; I admire her less, but I love her more,—at least, with a tenderer feeling; in the same way that we are drawn with a gentler sympathy towards one who has lost the glow of health, and who wears the look of dejectedness.

I could sit for ever in a forest; sylvan scenes, are those which live the most greenly in my memory, and come to my imagination the most unbidden: other scenes may possess greater boldness, and a higher description of what is called beauty; but there are none, that for me have so deep an attraction. The solitudes of the Norwegian forests; the romantic dells of Ardennes,—the long vistas and glades, in the woods of Dauphiny, come more frequently, and with greater

vividness to my mind, than scenes which would be thought by others more sublime. I can indeed call up to imagination, the giant Alps, and wander in fancy among their beautiful vallies, or climb the steeps which sentinel them. I can gaze upon the calm, fair Mediterranean, tremulously imaging the lonely tinted clouds that float upon the fading blue of a southern sky. I can follow again in imagination, the course of the Rhine or the Danube, as they glide on through scenes of surpassing beauty. But all of these require a slight effort to be detained, and are never pictured upon the mind, so as to cheat living realities. I remember, that even from childhood, in viewing exhibitions of pictures, those which transfixed me before them, were the wood scenes of Hobbima. I used to stand and gaze upon them for hours: I used to penetrate in fancy, some glade, whose opening the painter had made visible, and recline upon the moss-grown roots of some 'father of the forest.'

CHAPTER XIV.

A Snow Storm—Continental opinions regarding Fox Hunting—The Author's opinions—A Boar Hunt—the Author's peril.

NEXT morning, as soon as it was light, every one was astir, in expectation of the hunt; but every one speedily went to bed again; for as soon as it was light, it was seen that a snow storm had begun, which had every appearance of continuing. However, there was some consolation to the hunters in the circumstance; for, if the snow should cease next day, the sport would be more excellent than if it had not fallen at all; because, in that case, the prints of the animals' feet would be visible, and success would consequently be more certain. It snowed the whole day, and fell remarkably fast; so that by nightfall, it lay between two and three feet deep in the street.

It may easily be credited, that there was no inconsiderable yawning among the barons, who were put sorely to their shifts how to get through the day; however, by dint of screwing off and on the barrels and locks of their guns; and examining and re-examining their shooting tackle, and feeding their dogs, and watching the snow falling, the time was got over until the dinner hour. After dinner, the task was easier: Rhenish wine, coffee, and pipes, filled up the evening; until the primitive hour of nine, when all the inmates of the *hotel des Pays bas* retired to rest, in hopes that next day the snow might have ceased, and the frost continue; and so it proved. A boar, I have said already, is excellent eating,—so excellent, that it is worth the trouble of hunting. On the continent, the *eatableness* of game, is considered to be no small reason for the pursuit of it. I have frequently heard much wonder expressed, even among sporting characters abroad, especially in France, at the universal passion for fox hunting which prevails in England. The constant interrogatory is, *est ce qu'on le mange?* And they cannot understand, why there should be so much eagerness in pursuit of an animal which cannot be eaten. For my own part, I am so little of a sportsman, that the flavour of the wild boar does somewhat enter into my calculations;

though I cannot but admit, that it savours considerably of the epicure, and much of the savage, to pursue game for the purpose of eating it. But the wild boar is a noble object of pursuit, independently of his adaptation for culinary purposes.

In fox hunting, there has always appeared to me a wonderful discrepancy between the means and the end. Scores of men, and horses, and dogs, and a solemn trysting place,— all to chase an insignificant little animal, not a match for the weakest of the dogs. But in boar hunting, all this is reversed: there, you have an enemy worth contending with; an enemy that will match two or three dogs, and as many hunters,—and not one enemy, but a score. So that in the preparation, and equipment of a boar hunt, there seems to be a just adaptation of means to the end. The comparison may also be viewed in another light. A fox hunt is all pleasure—all pastime,—such an exercise, in short, as any lady who rides well might engage in,—as far as toil and hardship are concerned; but widely different is the boar hunt,—one walks twenty miles perhaps, through a thick forest, often knee deep in snow; real fatigue must be encountered; torrents must be crossed; cold, often excessive, must be endured,—and, when the enemy is found, it is not always an absolute rout,—danger, to a certain degree, must be

hazarded, and there are at St. Hubert, several persons bearing marks of the fury of the wounded boar.

All the difficulties I have mentioned, excepting the last, I encountered on the day of the hunt. Being accustomed to walk, the fatigue I reckoned little of; but not being provided with such covering for the feet and legs, as the people of that country always employ to exclude water, the cold became scarcely endurable. Completely wet, and being obliged to continue walking knee deep at least in snow, the cold constantly increased, until, through different gradations,—among others, that of extreme pain,—the feet and ancles became seemingly lifeless, and a faintness came over the whole body, accompanied by a swimming in the head, and an inclination to lie down. Had I at this moment been separated from the hunters, I should certainly have fallen, never to rise more. One of them however, observed my situation; and upon swallowing a glass of brandy, which he hastened to give me, I felt instantly renovated; the faintness disappeared, and an immediate glow was communicated to the feet. But this is not the danger to which I alluded in the title to this chapter.

After being thus renovated, I determined to make the best of my way back to St. Hubert; for having

already seen three boars killed, my curiosity was satisfied. The hunters explained to me, the direction in which I must proceed; and told me I had not more than three miles of forest to go through, before getting into open ground. At first, I went merrily on; it was somewhat fatiguing indeed to walk in very deep snow, up steeps and down steeps, but had this been all, the difficulties would easily have been overcome.

When the hunt began, it was bright sunshine; about the time I left the hunters, the sun became obscured, and it continued to darken as I went along; the wind too had been quite still; now, it began to sigh among the trees; and shortly it came in gusts, stripping them of their feathery burden, and of their frail leaves together; this was the prelude to a snow-storm, and I soon discovered that the flakes were falling not from the trees only, but from the sky also.

I continued to walk through the forest in the direction which had been pointed out; and after about an hour's walking, I came to the road which had been named to me. In this road,—little better than a broad forest track,—the snow lay extremely deep, and was falling thick, and occasionally drifting; my feet were getting benumbed again, and I had still six miles to walk before reaching St. Hubert. The road was however,

obvious enough; and I hoped by walking fast and heavily, to prevent my feet from becoming more benumbed. After walking about two miles, the road emerged from the forest; but in place of difficulties being then at an end, as I had anticipated, I saw that they were insurmountable.

While inclosed in the forest, I had not been aware of either the extent of the storm or the violence of the wind; but, upon emerging from it, I found it quite in vain to attempt proceeding farther; the snow was drifting in clouds over the open heath, and with such violence, that it was impossible to keep the eyes open, or face the wind. There was no trace of any road,—all was equally white; I knew the heath to be full of moss pits, and trenches, and holes; and as it was difficult even to guess in which direction the road lay, to attempt reaching St. Hubert seemed certain destruction. There were two alternatives left;—the one, to seek shelter in the forest, and remain there all night; and the other, to retrace the road, and walk as far as Marche, a distance of about fifteen miles. The latter plan I at once perceived to be impracticable,—for my feet were again nearly benumbed,—night was approaching,—and I had already walked more than twenty-five miles. I, therefore determined upon the former plan, though with little or no expectation of ever seeing the morning.

I had just turned to enter the forest, when I descried something moving towards me along the road,—not at a great distance, but still indistinct, owing to the quantity of snow which was falling; I soon distinguished it to be a horse,—and alone; it had a bridle in its mouth, and some pieces of rope hanging from it. I intercepted it; and the snow being deep, and the road narrow, I fortunately caught the bridle. I thought very little about what the horse was doing there,—but I felt confident it was on its way somewhere; I therefore got upon its back; and fixing myself as firmly as I could, held down my head, and let it proceed upon its journey; it soon entered upon the heath, and took a direction quite the reverse of that which I should have chosen; and proceeded at as fast a pace as the deep snow would permit. In less than an hour I was carried safely into the stable-yard of the *hotel de Pays bas*, to the infinite surprise of the hotel keeper, who saw us arrive.

The horse belonged to the mail, a clumsy sort of *cabriolet*, which goes weekly to Liège, by way of Marche. It had left St. Hubert about noon,—but the postillion, having taken advantage of the great doings that were going on there, by coming in for an allowance of brandy,—partly from this cause, and partly owing to the storm, had de-

viated from his road, and overturned the mail about ten miles from St. Hubert. This horse had shaken himself free, and had chosen to return to St. Hubert rather than go forward to Marche. A lucky determination for me. So violent was the storm, that the hunting party did not return to St. Hubert, but remained at Nassogne all night,—a village, which was fortunately at no great distance when the storm commenced.

CHAPTER XV.

Being rather an uninteresting Chapter.

THERE are not any two things in the world precisely alike, or of precisely the same excellence and value, excepting numbers, abstractly; or else, those things wherein there is in reality no value, but upon which the common consent of mankind has set a value,—such as silver and gold, and certain paper money. If there be any other things which seem to us to be precisely similar, whether in colour, dimension, or weight, it is owing to the imperfection of our senses in all cases where these are the judges; or, it is the fault of the instruments which we employ; and their want of perfection is also to be traced to the imperfection of our nature.

These few sentences may serve as an introduction to this observation, that no two chapters of a book can be of equal excellence,—certainly not intrinsically,—and, I think, not even in the estimation of the reader. One may say, indeed, "I do not know which chapter to prefer,—this, or that;" but the hesitation does not arise from want of preference, but from want of decision; or, if it be said that these are the same thing, inasmuch as decision must necessarily follow preference, then, I say (rather than dip into so deep a question), that the hesitation arises from want of memory; for two chapters are not like two pictures, or two glasses of wine. In judging of these, the senses take immediate cognizance of their merits; and, if this were possible of two chapters,—could their points of excellence and of weakness be exhibited panoramically to the mind,—there would be no hesitation as to preference; all hesitation in the preference of one book, or one story, or one chapter over another, is owing to the indistinctness with which their parts are reproduced by the faculty of memory. It constantly happens, that after familiarizing the mind with any two objects, a preference is awarded, which was previously withheld. We hear two overtures played, and are asked which we prefer; we answer, that we are not yet qualified to decide, we must hear them

again; and it is, after hearing them two or three times, that we are enabled to answer the question.

This little dissertation has arisen in an odd enough way. The title of a chapter is commonly given to it, to indicate its contents; but, in this case, the practice has been reversed. Its contents have been suggested by the title. Indeed, had a title been given to it, indicative of its contents, that title would have been very different from the title which is prefixed; for, to send Chapter XV. into the world, and into such an ill-natured world too,—with an announcement that it is uninteresting, is to make it bear false witness against itself,—for there are many thinking persons to whom, I rather believe, this chapter is particularly suited. Let me read what I have written from the beginning,— * * * *. Uninteresting!!! Why? it is the most profound morsel I have ever penned; there is not a line that will not make one think for a week. It comprehends the whole theory of numbers and proportion, paper currency, and bullion; and the philosophy of the human mind to boot. Uninteresting!!—but I will let the word stand, just to prove the excellence of the saying.

CHAPTER XVI.

Reflections—A visit to the Solitaire.

It never fails to inspire me with a feeling of melancholy, when I see a family calculated to adorn society, living in a place like St. Hubert. This particularly struck me with regard to the family of the inspector of the forests, an excellent worthy man, with a wife, two sons, and two daughters. Neither the wife, the sons, nor the daughters had ever been out of Ardennes,—probably none of them ever might. The eldest son, a fine handsome youth, is one of the under keepers; he does nothing but hunt, and will probably succeed to his father's situation; he had read the writings of des Cartes, and never having read any other philosophy, was a disciple of the

Vortices. I never visited this family without a feeling of sadness, when I thought that they had never seen a town with more than three streets, nor would probably ever look upon any other landscape than the heath and wood of Ardennes.

I have already said, that the church is a structure fitted to adorn a place far superior to St. Hubert. One prominent talent of travellers I do not possess,—I cannot describe churches; and it really seems somewhat presumptuous in me, to thrust myself forward as a traveller, without possessing this talent; for I never read a book of travels in my life, wherein descriptions of churches did not occupy the greater part. This I can say, however,—the church of St. Hubert is like hundreds of other churches I have seen, and indeed, differs very little from any other that I recollect; so that there is no necessity to describe it, as the most intelligible of all descriptions, is to say of a thing, that it is very like something else. I entered it only thrice; once, at the celebration of Christmas-eve mass; and twice, that I might have my faith strengthened by looking upon the relics of St. Hubert.

About five miles from St. Hubert, in the midst of the forest, there lives a female hermit—*une solitaire,* a young handsome woman, who takes this method of purifying herself from the contamina-

tions, which it seems she had previously contracted in the world. I went to see her, one day in February; her residence is in one of the most impervious places of the forest; her hut, formed of branches and straw, is a work of love of the Catholic peasantry. When you get to the top of a little alley that has been cleared, and that leads to it, you see a board affixed to a tree, with this inscription, "*Si ce n'est que la curiosité que vous mene, retirez.*" I did not, however, pay any regard to this injunction, but proceeded to her retreat, where I of course found her praying; and it was not until she had ended her orizons that she acknowledged my presence. She said, it was easier to fly from temptation than to remain and resist it; and her experience had, I believe, gone some length in proof of her theory. She lived upon vegetables, brought to her by the devout; and drank water, like all her predecessors.

The winter of 1824-5, was a very mild winter, as every one recollects; for, with the exception of the snow-storm I have spoken of, no snow fell that season. This was fortunate for the *religieuse*. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood told me, that the situation in which her hut was erected would, in ordinary winters, preclude altogether the possibility of approaching it for weeks toge-

ther; so that, in that case, she must perish of hunger. It was only the spring before, that she had commenced this life; and, it is likely, that before another winter, she may have so purified the spirit, that in order to render farther purification possible, the world's contaminations must be again resorted to.

CHAPTER XVII.

A visit to the Chateau de Jamblinne—Manners of the Nobles, &c.

THE hunters had been gone more than a month; and I now determined upon paying my promised visit to the chateau of *Monsieur le Baron de Jamblinne.* It lies upon the river Ourte, near La Roche, about twenty-five miles from St. Hubert. I felt somewhat anxious to know a little of the domestic economy of noble establishments in this remote quarter; and I therefore set out upon my visit with alacrity. I chose the time of a gentle frost, when there was no snow upon the ground, and left St. Hubert about nine in the morning.

I have already spoken of the extreme difficulty of finding one's road in this country. Roads branch off so multifariously, both over the heath

and through the forest, and at such acute angles, —although terminating ultimately at very different points,—that it is entirely a matter of accident whether one goes right or wrong; so often did I err in this day's walk, that, in place of getting to my journey's end in seven hours from the time of setting off, it was half-past two before I had passed through the forest, and ten unmeasured miles still lay between me and my journey's end.

The forest had wonderfully changed its aspect since I passed through it in coming from Luxembourgh. At every step, the feet pressed a cushion of fallen leaves; and as I shook the branches in passing, few fell from their stems. I have often felt it to be a very solemn sound—though a very minute one, the noise of a withered leaf dropping among its companions in the forest's stillness. It is the "small still voice" of decay, and speaks a solemn language to the soul of him, whose feelings are in unison with the sad and the desolate.

After getting clear of the forest, I passed many romantic places, and for some time had no difficulty in finding my road, there being but one; and I congratulated myself upon this the more, that it was beginning to be extremely foggy, so much so that I could form no accurate idea of the direction in which my destination lay. However,

after sunset, when the mist had much thickened, and when I was upon an open heath, the road branched into two,—and at so very acute an angle, that it was quite impossible for me to give the slightest preference to one path over the other; I confess I did not much like the idea of choosing the wrong one,—for I calculated that I could not be more than three miles from my destination; and the prospect of a comfortable house, a warm welcome, a blazing fire, and a smoking supper, had attractions considerably superior to a walk in a cold misty night, over a wide heath. I had no alternative, however, but to choose at hazard; and I did so. After walking for nearly an hour, and when it had become almost dark, I suddenly entered a village; the fog had been so dense, that I was unable to tell whether the road lay over a heath or not, and I did not perceive a house, until I was encompassed by houses. I inquired of a blacksmith, the glare of whose forge was easily seen through the mist, what was the name of the village? and I heard, with no small pleasure, that I had arrived at my destination; it was the village belonging to *La Seigneurie de Jamblinne*, and he conducted me to the front of a large, tall, dark-coloured house, surrounded with a high wall, which, I was informed, was the chateau of *Monsieur le Baron.*

The arrival of a stranger in these parts is

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somewhat unusual,—so that the servant, who opened the gate to me, seemed not a little astonished to find one whom he had never seen before craving admittance. I inquired for the baron; and was told he had been absent since yesterday morning upon a hunting party, and was not expected home until the following day. I then inquired if *Madame la Baronne* was at home; and being answered in the affirmative, I followed the domestic into a large hall, while he went to inform his lady that a stranger was within her gates. A lady (not la baronne) made her appearance,—a sort of *bonne*, who came of course to ascertain who he might be, that in the depth of winter, and in the dusk of the evening, arrived on foot at the chateau of the Baron Jamblinne. I told her my name, and that I had come from St. Hubert, where I had met the baron about a month ago, and that he had invited me to visit him at his chateau. Upon this information, she desired me to take the trouble to follow her,—and I was ushered into a small room up stairs, and requested to wait a moment, until she had apprised the baroness of my arrival. The next moment the baroness made her appearance, all smiles and courtesy,—told me she had expected me for some time past; that the baron would return the next day; and hoped, that until then I would consider

myself at home. She then led the way to a large handsome room, well furnished and well lighted, and where there was a charming fire. A young man, in priest's habilaments, was seated at coffee; *Monsieur L'Abbé*—I forget what.

In this country, every person of distinction keeps a priest in the house, who manages every thing as in the olden time; confesses,—shrives,—prays,—advises,—directs,—and who is, at once, house and land steward—overseer of all things, both of time and of eternity,—and unites in himself, all authority and all possible humility. He lives well and sleeps soft; has his own apartments; dines with the family,—unless when he does penance upon fish and game in his sanctuary; walks out or rides out, and has no severer duty to perform, than saying the daily prayers prescribed by his order, confessing the lady of the mansion, and giving wholesome advice, both with regard to this world and the next. I found in this *Abbé* the perfect ultraism of intolerance,—such a man as I did not imagine existed now-a-days. Apart from theology, however, he was a man with whom one might pass an hour agreeably enough. He was most anxious to be informed of any thing that was new, or of which he had never heard before; and was particularly attracted by the doctrines of phrenology, which had not then reached Les

Ardennes. He insisted upon my drawing out a map of the head, and marking the organs with their numbers and references. *Madame la Baronne* offered an inspection of her head; and was particularly delighted with the compliments which the inspection gave me an opportunity of paying her. All foreigners are unusually pleased with compliments from the English, because the English are supposed to be more niggardly of them than other nations are. The evening passed away pleasantly enough,—coffee, talk, and a hot supper, brought it to nine; and a sound sleep brought it to nine next morning.

After breakfast, the baron made his appearance, returning with a fine doe and half of a wild boar; and giving me a most cordial welcome. It was, of course, necessary to make the tour of his estate with him; to inspect his garden, his terrace, his fields, his woods, his stables, his dog-kennel, his pig-stye, and to go through all the rooms of his chateau; every thing was good in its way. The garden as good as the climate would admit of; the chateau not badly furnished; and the whole paraphernalia of hunting, as perfect as the gunsmiths and saddlers of the Netherlands are capable of manufacturing.

The Baron de Jamblinne, is a rich baron for Ardennes. He possesses about £1200 per annum;

and he told me he spent it every shilling;—meat and vegetables cost almost nothing, said he; but I have horses to buy, and dogs to buy, and guns to buy; and the abbé's salary to pay, and servants to pay, and taxes to pay; so that I have nothing over. He certainly lived in good style,—judging by his table, at least; which was not, however, the best criterion,—both because, by his own admission it cost little, and because it might possibly be improved by the presence of a stranger. We had fish, patés,—and very nice patés they were,—venison, wild-boar, chickens, wild-ducks, pudding and pastry. We had Champagne—Burgundy (Volnay)—Bourdeaux—St. Peray,—so that a better dinner could not easily have been furnished forth any where.

I believe I might have lived with the baron all my days, and even partly superseded *Monsieur L'Abbé*, in his administration over earthly things at least. I need not say, that my visit soon began to fatigue me, and that I became anxious to exchange society for solitude.

I have rarely found a man with whom I could spend much time with satisfaction. By far the greater number of minds are speedily got to the bottom of; some sooner and some later,—but almost all, after a certain period. One can predict to a certainty what will be the views, sentiments,

and decisions of most minds upon every occasion. The reason is, that there are few original minds.

The baron kissed both my cheeks at parting; so did the *Abbé*; this was very disgusting, but what could I do? The baroness offered me hers; so did *Madame la Bonne*. Louis held out his hand for money; so did Josephe, and so did Josephine; but vails in Ardennes encroach but little upon one's system of economy. I recollect passing a few days, upon one occasion, at a gentleman's house in Wales. The morning of my departure, the head servant demanded his vails with much more assurance than any waiter at an inn would have done. Then came the boy, then the housemaid, then the groom,—and when I imagined I had fairly got rid of them at the expenditure of about a guinea, a servant actually presented me with a bill for washing, amounting to some shillings!

There is a story comes into my head; an old story it is, and well known too,—but it is an excellent story nevertheless. I must have read it somewhere; and so, perhaps, may many of my readers. I neither recollect the place nor the persons,—but it is of no consequence. Two gentlemen, after paying a visit to the house of a great man, found the servants ranged along the passage as they retired, expecting to receive their vails.

One of the gentlemen was a few yards behind the other, and he who walked last, noticed that the servants seemed infinitely more pleased by the donations of him who went first, than by his own; and he marvelled not a little, as he thought he had been particularly liberal. When they were both seated in their carriage, "how much," said he to his friend, "did you give to each of these ruffians, for they all seemed better satisfied with your gift than with mine?" "I only tickled the palms of their hands," replied he.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Being the best Chapter in this Book.

I HAVE no intention of saying any thing of my journey from the chateau de Jamblinne, back to St. Hubert, because as I returned by the same route as that by which I went, there could be nothing new to say; excepting perhaps some little difference in my reflections; not worth the detail.

It is a dreary feeling, that which we experience in returning to a place where there is no one to welcome us; it possesses neither the variety of travelling, nor the interest of going home. This word should never be applied to a place merely, unconnected with persons. Home is no home, where there is no one to receive us, and look glad at our coming; home is, wherever we are sure of

sympathy, and kindness, and affection. I returned to St. Hubert, to the house that I had lived in; there was a blazing fire, but the hearth was lonely; there was no hand extended to me; there was a spread table, but no one to sit down with me; no eye to meet mine when I raised it,—it fell upon vacancy, or upon the bare wall. I will not think of this,—it is past.

I shall now pass on to the time when I left St. Hubert. It was the midst of February; winter was over, and spring was just visible,—as visible, at least, as it could be at that season, in a country like Ardennes, covered with heath, and oak forests. The heath was, however, giving out a fragrant smell, and the earlier spring flowers were bordering the forest. I left St. Hubert for Namur; but purposing to visit in my way, the most remarkable thing in Ardennes, the subterranean course of the river Lesse.

I entered St. Hubert without joy, and I quitted it without regret; no one there was any thing to me,—and I was nothing to anybody. A large wolf dog was the only creature that might perhaps feel my absence; and as I patted him on the head on the morning of my departure, and said, "poor fellow!" I felt that I would rather have avoided the meeting.

Although I felt no regret at leaving St. Hubert,

I remember well the morning of my departure. The lady, to whom the house I rented belonged, came to receive the key; she arrived about nine, just after I had finished coffee, and brought in her hand a bottle of very old Rhenish wine, as a parting treat. She was a large, good-looking woman, about forty, married to a man upwards of seventy,—a draper, grocer, and dealer in all things, and one of the under-keepers of the forest. The lady expressed in strong terms her regret at my departure,—and, among other complimentary speeches, she said, fixing her eyes upon me, "*Monsieur, comme vous avez des beaux yeaux!*"

Rochfort is about fifteen miles from St. Hubert. The road to it, of course, through the forest, and then over heathy hills. It is romantically situated, upon a rock, as may be gathered by the name,—the river Lesse washing its base, and prettily wooded hills lying around. When entering the inn, I found myself seemingly in a private house, with almost the comforts of an English fire-side; all of them, indeed, excepting that it was not home; a warm little snug parlour,—a good fire,—papered walls,—a pair of candles upon a table, at which were seated three young ladies at work. I thought, at first, I had made a mistake; but I speedily found I was in the right. These were the hostess' daughters,—the hostess herself pre-

sided in the kitchen. I know that I had a comfortable dinner about seven o'clock, but I forget what it consisted of; and I recollect drinking a bottle of Rhine wine, for which I paid the extravagant price of four francs; but a treat was waiting me at Rochfort, which I little anticipated. Ever since leaving Vienna, I had drunk coffee in the morning, and coffee in the evening,—tea, never; always coffee,—coffee,—coffee; in the course of my conversation with one of the young ladies, I happened to mention my love of tea, and that I had not tasted any in Ardennes. "*Ma foi*," said she, "*nous en avons*," this was the best news I had heard for a long time; the tea was brought, and, to my infinite joy, I found it to be tea, such as might have graced any table in Old England. How I did revel in the prospect—and still more in the enjoyment. I had not been accustomed at St. Hubert, to go to bed before twelve, so that I had two or three hours vacant before bed-time, and these I determined to occupy in composing an Epic Poem in praise of Tea; and having with some difficulty obtained pen, ink, and paper, the following is the result of my labour.

THE PRAISE OF TEA.

AN EPIC POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Poet invoketh the Muse; inviteth her to descend to the breakfast-parlour, and maketh a short digression upon steam. Supporteth the dignity of the Epic, and promulgateth his intention of outstripping former poets. He describeth the comforts of an arm-chair, and descanteth at some length, upon tea, muffins and herring. The scene changeth to evening; the Poet anticipateth the pleasure of his evening's repast; digresseth upon the joys of indolence, and devolveth upon his wife the duty of infusing the tea. The Poet invoketh the genius of tea, and passeth a censure upon the votaries of Bacchus; maketh a vow to drink the choicest of tea, and introduceth Pekoe to the reader's notice; stateth his ideas respecting the proper mixture of sugar; digresseth upon Macadam, and road making; and offereth some observations upon the doctrine of proportion. The Poet vaunteth the extent of his own knowledge, and introduceth Dryden, Pope, and Johnson to the reader's notice; stateth the uselessness of praising dead men, and giveth an opinion upon the merits of the living; again digresseth upon Wordsworth, Southey, hexameters, cream, and sheep's-head broth; maketh known the merits of Hunt, Hazzlitt, and Lamb; descanteth upon the Ladies' school of poetry, and the advantage of currant wine and lemon juice; speaketh favourably of blue eyes, but contemptuously of blue stockings; and stateth distinctly, in what the difference betwixt woman and tea consisteth. Maketh the discovery, that a hero is wanting, and requesteth the reader to wait a little, until one be obtained.

THE PRAISE OF TEA.

I.

Awake, my Muse! for I have just awoke,
And to the breakfast-parlour let us go;
'Tis pleasant sure to have one's slumber broke,
When tea and toast are waiting one below;
And, oh! how sweet, to see the whizzing smoke—
(It should be steam, but then the verse you know
Would not be rhyme) issuing from the spout
Of the tea-kettle,— boiling, without doubt.

II.

'Tis not the making of the tea I sing,
Nor yet the pleasure which we have in drinking;
My poem being epic, I must bring
Into my verse, no image that is sinking;
For then, my Pegasus might chance take wing,
And that would be a pity; as I'm thinking,
Before my epic's done, that I'll supplant ye,
Immortal shades of Milton, Homer, Dante!

III.

Oh! let me be in armed-chair reclined,
Just as the ninth hour strikes; a morning gown
Wrapped loose around me, and my feet enshrined
In slippers soft and warm; then, let me crown
My joys with tea; while slowly do I grind
Muffins of crisped coat, and gentle brown;
And (pardon, if you think in taste I'm erring)
Eying, well pleased, a roasted Norfolk herring.

IV.

Or lay me on some sofa's swelling seat,
When evening's latest light has died away;
When shutters close in all, and curtains meet,
And on the wall, the bright fire blazes gay:
Pleased, let me muse upon the coming treat,
As the tea-things sweetly jingle on the tray,
When on the table placed by maiden's hand,
Cups, sugar, cream—in sweet confusion stand.

V.

I hate all trouble; motion I abhor,
And never stir at all, now that I've got
Another to stir for me: I adore
Rest and repose! which I uphold the lot—
The natural state of man, as half a score
Of learned heads have said, though some say not;
But, as these bustling men are nought to me,
"Maria, love! will you infuse the tea!"

VI.

Oh, tea! thou brightest source of inspiration!
  Thy praise, in loftiest descant let me hymn;
Let fool and madman scorn thy sweet potation,
  And sip the grape until their eyes grow dim:
Hear me, ye Gods! hear my determination!
  (No faint resolve of foolishness or whim),
That tea I'll have, and ever drink the best of it.
"Is this Pekoe, my love? have n't we a chest of it?"

VII.

"Three lumps, if you please, rather undersized;—
  "All somewhat large, my love? 'tis most distressing."
Sugar, like stones, should be Macadamized:
  If it were not that I should be digressing,
I'd tell you how small stones when pulverized
  Make the best roads; and tea (a greater blessing)
Demands ingredients each in just relation,
Ratio, proportion, and amalgamation.

VIII.

I'm cunning in those matters; so I should;
  I never knew a man of parts but was!
Dryden, Pope, Johnson, drank tea, and I could
  Name fifty others; but I won't, because
I can't perceive that there is any good
  In praising dead men, who give no applause:
As for the living, for as much as Scott's worth,
They have n't all together drank a groat's worth.

IX.

Wordsworth writes pastorals, and feeds on cream;
  Southey, hexameters, with sheep's-head broth;
Hunt, Hazlitt, Lamb, and others, whom we deem
  Not worthless quite, drink porter; but I'm loth
To name "who sip of water's harmless stream,"—
  For they be ladies all; yet, from the froth
That lies a-top, some (perchance Mrs. Hemans)
Drop in some currant-wine, or juice of lemons.

X.

Oh! woman, woman,—gentle, faithful, kind,—
  Sweet'ner of life! (for life is all too rough)
There needs no learning in thy head, to bind
  Our hearts to thee, for thou hast charms enough
Hid in thy beaming eye. As for the mind,
  (Pardon, ye azure fair ones!) I but scoff
At charms derived from other kinds of blue
Than the eye's sapphire, or the veins' soft hue.

IX.

But this is a digression:—for my song
  Is writ in praise of tea, not woman's eyes,—
Two things most opposite; for being strong
  Tea is the more attractive,—but there lies
In woman's weakness, witchery. I'm wrong
  To be digressing still; but, when one tries
To get at rhymes, where rhymes are somewhat scarce,
One's glad in any way to fill the verse.

XII.

Stanza the twelfth, and I have found no hero!
An Epic without actor's out of rule;
The reader's interest will drop to Zero,
And I, the writer, be pronounced a fool!
I'll search for one about the time of Nero—
For, as my model is the classic school,
Some ancient name will suit me to a tittle;
So while I'm thinking, please to wait a little.

CHAPTER XIX.

A subterranean Voyage.

As the last was the best chapter in this book, the present cannot also be the best; it is the most wonderful of them all, however, and might absolutely be set down for a fiction, if it appeared in any book not warranted authentic. It might be entitled, "the marvellous adventures of Coriandrus Colicutibut; who, entering with a river underneath a mountain, is carried by it into another country." Now, although I cannot perceive any wonderful courage in committing one's-self to a subterranean stream, when others have done so before, and suffered no scaith; yet, I should much reverence the memory of that man who, in ignorance of the event, first undertook to hazard the experiment: that an exploit of this

nature is deemed by the masters of fiction, a good ground-work for one, is sufficiently apparent from its forming the subject of 'Sinbad the sailor's fourth voyage;' and I very well recollect, that when a child, this was my favourite among all his adventures,—at least, it disputed the palm with that other, in which he was carried upon a roc's back out of a valley full of serpents. When I got up therefore in the morning, and remembered what was before me, I was carried back into the days of my childhood—when, awaking in the morning, I used to draw the 'Arabian Nights,' from under my pillow,—and I felt myself elevated into a character almost as heroic as Sinbad. What an adventurous person am I!—will it be credited? said I to myself; this is reality,—whereas Sinbad's voyage is only fiction. I drank my tea, paid my bill, and sallied out to render myself immortal.

Now, in order that you may comprehend the geography of the river Lesse, and where it enters underneath the mountain, and where it comes out; and where, above all, the mountain itself is situated, I must have recourse again to my graphic powers. Figure to yourself (this is the way I began the description of St. Hubert, in which I succeeded so perfectly to my own and to your satisfaction, and I cannot for my part, imagine a

better way of beginning); figure then to yourself, I say, for if you can do so, my object is accomplished; if on the other hand you cannot,—but first hear what I wish you to figure to yourself, and if you are unable to do so, then I take it for granted I have failed in my description. Once more then I say, figure to yourself, a rock, perpendicular at one end, and rising gradually on the other side, broad enough on the top for a street, and in effect, a street on the top of it; suppose then, a river bathing the base of this rock; rapid, somewhat turbulent, stony—the cause indeed, of its turbulence; now, follow the stream after it has passed this rock; it neither deviates to the right nor to the left, but flows swiftly and angrily forward in the middle of a wide valley, right towards a hill which obstructs its progress,—a hill that extends quite across the valley, wooded to the top, and about seven hundred feet high. As the stream approaches this barrier, it gets less turbulent, as if it became alarmed,—and just before reaching it, sinks into perfect placidity—filling its channel from bank to bank, and assuming an air of sullenness at being forced to quit the light of day. The opening is just wide enough for the stream,—and the top of the arch is not three yards above its surface, so that the prospect seems sufficiently gloomy.

There is a little cottage near to the opening, belonging to the person who acts as guide, or rather boatman, for the stream is the guide to both the traveller and the boatman. I am not fond of avowing cowardice; indeed I am not a coward, and have few such avowals to make; however, there is certainly some resolution needed, to enter the boat that is to carry you through the bowels of the earth; a course of miles, and in utter darkness, as far at least as the light of day is concerned, for one is of course provided with a flambeau. Now, I confess, I never would advise subterranean expeditions of any kind, neither in caverns, nor catacombs, nor mines; excepting the salt mines of Cracow, and the silver mines of Koningsberg; but as this is the narrative of a journey through the Netherlands, and not through Poland or Norway, I cannot be permitted to state my grounds of exception; it is a fact however, that with these exceptions, subterranean expeditions have never repaid me for my labour and expense. The only use of them that I know, is, to give one some idea of "darkness visible;" which they certainly do.

Before going to Ardennes, I had determined never to be under-ground again,—during my life at least. I had been quite satiated with grottos and excavations, and caverns, and mines, and

catacombs; however, it must be admitted, that being carried by water, is rather a novel feature in a subterranean expedition; and to be carried out of the earth again as well as into it, is still more novel; no one indeed, who had ever read Sinbad, could resist the temptation. Behold me then, seated in the boat,—shot from the light of day,—gazing, now upon the roof and its crystalizations,—now upon the water, reflecting the glimmering flambeau,—now straining my sight to penetrate into the farther darkness,—and now, upon the signal *baissez la tête*, crouching down to avoid having my brains knocked out. Sometimes, the stream was rapid,—sometimes it was slow,—sometimes the channel was narrow,—and sometimes it widened into a lake; at one place the roof was as high as the dome of St. Peter's, or higher for aught I to know to the contrary, for I could not see it; at another place so low, as almost to graze the boat. The idea was every thing; I was underneath a mountain, and was a second Sinbad; but it was wonderfully comfortless notwithstanding, and I felt no repugnance whatever at being restored to the "common sun" and air.

CHAPTER XX.

Ciney to Namur — A Physician's Appetite.

It was too late when I had finished my subterranean voyage, to set out for Ciney. I, therefore, resolved to pass the remainder of the day at Rochfort; however, when I returned thither, I found a physician of that neighbourhood who meant to walk home the same evening, and whose residence lay about twelve miles on the same road by which I meant to go. We dined together, —and I was informed, there was no inn betwixt Rochfort and Civet,— and as this medical gentleman offered me a bed at his house, on condition of my being the companion of his walk, I was easily prevailed upon; so, after drinking a bottle of Rhenish, we left Rochfort together about three o'clock.

It might be supposed, that leaving one place at three, to get to another place twelve miles distant, one might calculate upon arriving before seven. I was not aware, however, of the sort of person whose guest I was to be. He was a man whose stomach seemed to be built upon different principles from those which regulate all other human stomachs. He did not eat that he might travel, but he travelled that he might eat! Although there were no towns or large villages on the road, there were houses by twos and threes, pretty thickly scattered. This gentleman was a celebrated practitioner,—and in every house, or, at least, among every cluster of houses, he had either a patient then, or had had one before, or possibly expected to have one at some future time; in short he knew every body, and every body seemed glad to see him. The first house he called at was about three miles from Rochfort, and I was not a little surprised to hear him assent to the proposal of cooking a harico of mutton; of which he ate as heartily as if it had been the first day after lent. Not a mile farther, we popped in upon coffee at another house, of which we both partook,—my gentleman accompanying it with a large allowance of brown bread, well buttered. Surely, thought I, when we had left this house, he will eat no more until he gets home; however,

about a league and a half farther on, I saw him again seated at a supper-table, upon which were bacon, and beef, and vegetables, and cheese; and of all of these he ate, seemingly with undiminished appetite!

We were now but half way, and it was already seven o'clock. Upon leaving this house, my companion set off at a smart pace, whereas, for some time before, he had seemed inclined to walk very leisurely. After proceeding for about a mile, at the rate of not less than five miles an hour, I ventured to ask him the reason of this accelerated pace. "A league farther," replied he, "I have a friend to see, and if we do not hasten we shall be too late for supper." We proceeded accordingly, at this pace, until we arrived at this friend's house, who, with his family, were seated at the supper table. Here I did justice to the supper, as well as my companion, who continued to eat with unsated relish. At length, we were again upon the road, and arrived at the physician's house about eleven. His wife was in bed, and so was his servant. The kitchen fire was not quite extinct, however, and to it we resorted; I, for heat,—and my companion, for the power it possessed of cooking some bacon, which he procured from the larder. This time, however, it seemed as if the supper were prepared more from the hospitable feeling of offering

supper in his own house to a stranger, than from the desire of satisfying his own appetite. I got a comfortable bed, and slept soundly,—and after a most abundant breakfast, I took the road about ten next morning.

The characteristic features of Ardennes began now to disappear. The country was better peopled; heath had, in many places, given way to oats; mills were tolerably frequent; the woods were less extensive; the roads rather better; the cottages somewhat cleaner and better built; and eating and drinking somewhat dearer.

Civet is in a manner joined to Charleroi, excepting that it is outside of the fortifications. It stands upon the Meuse, in a wonderfully pleasant situation; but, after residing for three months in Ardennes during winter, the first appearance of any thing like a cultivated country in the opening of spring, and on a fine day as this was, might seem somewhat beyond its real deserts. "Charleroi! Charleroi!" I repeated to myself several times, when, having inquired the name of the town on the other side of the bridge, I was answered, "Charleroi." I felt that it was associated in my mind with some past incidents, but what they were I was at first unable to recall. Suddenly it broke upon me; and I was sitting with Durand and Elize, in the salon at Avignon. Poor fellow!

said I, aloud; for, somehow or other, I was firmly pursuaded he had been killed at Waterloo. But, before proceeding, let me go back several years, to give the reader some information that may increase his interest in what I have to relate.

I was sitting upon one of the high grounds, on the road between Aix and Avignon, looking down upon the latter city, and buried in a deep reverie, not connected with Petrarch and Laura, but in which the history of the popes was passing before me, when a step close behind, broke the lengthened link of images, that like wave on wave, had floated on the sea of fancy. It was a French officer who, with many apologies, hoped he had not disturbed the reverie of monsieur. The interruption was rather in discord with the tone of my mind; but through the tinsel of French manner I thought I could discover something beyond the glitter; and it has ever been my rule in foreign travel, to encourage rather than repel the advance of strangers. I accordingly answered with what courtesy I am master of,—and we sat down upon the brow of the hill together. The secrets of a Frenchman, especially those in whose disclosure vanity may glean a little harvest, are seldom very closely prisoned; and I was soon master of his budget. He was quartered at Aix, and was thus far on his road to Avignon, to see the

sweetest girl in all France, by whom he was tenderly beloved, and *jolie comme un ange.* He possessed, he said, a small independency in the north, near Charleroi, and was to be united to Elize in a few weeks. I, in my turn, told him that I was an Englishman, and a traveller, *pour plaisir,* —that I had come last from Lyons, and intended remaining a week at Avignon and in the neighbourhood, before taking the road to Nice. We descended to the city together, and speedily found accommodation, near the site of the pope's delapidated palace. My friend pressed me to accompany him to the house of Elize, who, he assured me, would be charmed to see me; but I excused myself on the score of fatigue, promising, however, to pay my respects the next morning. During the few days that succeeded my arrival at Avignon, Monsieur Durand was my constant companion; he carried me to be introduced to his bride-elect, whom I found very far superior to the generality of French women; and I was daily indebted to her and her amiable family, for the greater part of the pleasure I found at Avignon.

One morning, about a week after our arrival, I was surprised by the unexpected entrance of Monsieur Durand; for I supposed him to be at that time some leagues distant, with a party to which I had been invited, but which I had

declined joining, owing to my preparations for setting out on the morrow. I was certain something important had brought Monsieur Durand—though, from his countenance, I was quite unable to guess whether he came to communicate good or evil. He had just received a summons to repair instantly to Aix, to march with the troops to which he belonged, and join the army destined to oppose the progress of Napoleon—the news of whose disembarkation at Frejus had reached Aix but a few hours before. "My union with Elize," said he, "must be postponed for a little,—until"—here he checked himself,—but when I glanced my eye at the cross of the legion of honour, and the medal, upon which were inscribed "Jena" and "Austerlitz," I had no difficulty in comprehending the cause of his hesitation. It would, perhaps, have been difficult for himself to tell, whether *l'amour*, or recollections of *la gloire*, were at that moment the more predominant. I parted from him with regret, because his was a kind and generous nature,—and with no expectation of being ever again thrown in his way; and when, a few months afterwards, I learnt the event of the fatal strife, in which so many thousands of his countrymen had fallen, I felt a severe pang for the probable fate of the open-hearted Frenchman.

Let me now return to Charleroi. It was a

lovely evening; and when I had taken some refreshment, I left my *auberge*, to stroll a little way into the country. Chance led me to the banks of the Meuse; and, as there could be no pleasanter path than by a river side, I followed that which led up the stream. When I had proceeded about two miles,—as nearly as I could guess, and when just about to retrace my steps, upon a sudden turning I came in sight of a cottage, which for beauty, I thought I had never seen equalled. It stood about a hundred yards from the river, with a garden sloping down to the stream. The cottage was cream-coloured, of one story only, and almost completely covered with the jasmine tree. The garden was one blow of early spring flowers: auriculas, polianthuses, primroses, daffodils, and many others, which my botanical knowledge does not permit me to name. I thought I had never beheld a spot of more sweet retirement, or one that I could more agreeably live in all my days. I was standing gazing upon it, thinking how happy its inmates might probably be, and had laid my hand upon the little wicker gate that led up the garden, merely by way of resting the arm, when the door of the cottage opened, and a lady, and then a gentleman appeared—I recognised them in a moment. It was Durand, and his Elize!

We hear much common-place about the insincerity of the French; I wish to God all the world had half the sincerity of the French colonel at Civet. It has been my lot, often to meet with a kind reception from strangers; and therefore it is, that I think more favourably of mankind, than misanthropes would make us believe mankind deserves to be thought of. This colonel had been rising rapidly in the French army; rising to power and riches; but through the intervention of my country, his master had been humbled,—the army to which he had belonged, beaten,—and he had had to endure the humiliation, of seeing an English guard mounted at the palace gates of his king; yet, if I had been directly instrumental in making his fortune, I could not have been received with greater kindness; but indeed, after I had passed a night under his roof, it seemed to me that he had little to regret in the fall of his patron; and, he appeared to feel no regret. Living in a beautiful country,—in his own cottage,—with health and seeming competence,—blessed with the endearments of domestic life,—an affectionate wife and two sweet children,—could he regret that the clang of arms had passed away? Glory could indeed no more circle his brows with the wreath of victory; but peace might be around him; and the interchange of affection and kind

offices, might hallow his home, and light him through all the journey of life. My income, said he, is 3000 francs a-year (£120 sterling). Half of that sum is my pay; and the other half is the interest of my wife's fortune. I have the cottage besides; I have all I desire; we live as we wish to live: there are my books—"*voila mes livres*," said he, not many, but choice; here are my music-books—Josephine and I, sing duets; I work in my garden, from which we have fruit, and flowers and vegetables, as many as we desire; I have a little horse in my stable,—sometimes *I* ride him—and sometimes I put Josephine upon him, and then I walk beside her; I have a boat on the river, and in warm evenings we row out together, and sometimes we take little Henri,—Mathilde is too young; and at Charleroi, I have one or two friends whom I see sometimes. I live nearly a thousand francs within my income—so that I have no cares, —for every deserving stranger I have a bed, and a place at my table. You see how we live, added he, (the conversation happened during dinner), stay with me as long as it is agreeable to you, we will make you as comfortable as we can; and when you go away, do not forget the cream-coloured cottage at Civet, and never pass within fifty miles of us without coming to see us. Josephine *looked* all that her husband *said*,—and

though it would be absurd to suppose any real sympathy between persons who knew so little of each other as myself and my entertainer,—yet, after having been, during many months, alone, this address made me to feel my loneliness the more; and made me begin to doubt, if nature had destined me for solitude. Cordially we shook hands at parting, and I stepped into the boat which was to glide down the river.

I mentioned, in the first chapter I think, that this register is written from memory. I cannot, therefore, tell more than I recollect; and it is odd enough, that tax my memory as I will, I cannot recal any thing of what I either saw or thought of, between Civet and Namur. I have nothing more than the recollection of gliding down the stream in a sunshiny day, and seeing picturesque banks; I must have passed through, or close to, the town of Dinant; but I recollect nothing of it. I think I was occupied with some vague dream about human happiness; but, I am very sure, that I came to no conclusion any way.

CHAPTER XXI.

Being a Dissertation upon Human Happiness.

I do not know of any speculation so interesting, and at the same time so useless, as that, which has human happiness for its object. No inquiry into this, can ever produce any result, or increase the collective happiness of man one jot. He is a vastly silly man, and a very shallow philosopher, who lays down any rules upon the subject, or attempts to point out the road to that great object of every man's desire. All that any one man can tell other men, is, what constitutes his own happiness; but he never can convince a man differently constituted from himself, that happiness is to be found in those things upon which he himself sets a value. No man will ever act in any

other way than in that way which he thinks most likely to conduce to his happiness; and the happiness of no two men being centred in precisely the same things, no two men will follow precisely the same course. This observation applies to the general objects of men's desires; to that accumulation, which each man fancies may procure him happiness. In individual instances,—in isolated cases,—it sometimes happens, that a man acts against his judgment; but never against his inclination. If the experiment succeed, judgment and inclination will next time go hand in hand.

Much akin to disputes regarding happiness, are those which regard the acquisition of wealth. "Be contented with what you have got," says one man, "you have already a sufficiency." "No," says the other, "I have not yet a sufficiency." "Foolish, ambitious man," says the former; but this conclusion does not follow,—the one man may be as little ambitious as the other. The only difference is,—that which is competency to the one, is not competency to the other; the circle of one man's enjoyments, is wider than the circle of another man's enjoyments; different measures are therefore required, to fill up the same degree of contentment; and it is just as unreasonable for one man to say to

another, "you have a sufficiency," as it would be, to prescribe to one's neighbour, the precise quantum of food, which his constitution and his inclination demand.

CHAPTER XXII.

Namur.

HERE my difficulties begin: for I am getting among places that every body knows; almost within sound of the cannon of Waterloo,—but I am determined, that if destiny shall carry me over the field of Waterloo, the reader shall gather that I have been there, from his geographical knowledge only, knowing as he must do, that one cannot go from Genappe to Brussels, without passing over it. This is a peculiarity upon which I rather pride myself. If ever I present to the public, a narrative of my travels in other parts of the world, I shall act upon this principle: when I take you to Venice, you shall hear nothing of the palace of St. Mark; at Rome, I shall leave St. Peter's to Eustace, and the Vatican

to Lady Morgan; in Flanders, I shall mention neither Rubens nor Teniers; at Paris, the Louvre shall be shut the whole of the time we are there; and unless you visit Paris in some other company than mine, which I strongly advise you to do,—you will never find out that there is a bridge in that city, called the Pont Neuf; or, that there is a palace called the Tuilleries, where the king lives,—and a garden attached to it, where the Parisian *beaux* and *belles* go to look at each other, and be looked at.

There is a great advantage in this manner of writing travels; for one cannot divine by reading the title of the book, what it will contain. In this tour through the Netherlands, you have learned something of Venice, and Rome, and Paris,—and it may possibly happen, that in the next tour I shall write,—through Russia, perhaps;—I may give a vast fund of information respecting Brussels and Waterloo.

It would be no difficult matter, to fill several chapters, and not short ones either, with the history of Namur. One might detail its siege by king William in 1695, who took it in sight of an army of 100,000 French, and although there were 60,000 men in the garrison; another chapter, might tell how it was ceded to the house of Austria in 1711, but taken by the French in

1746; and a third, might be made incredibly long, in speaking about its castle, and its fortifications, churches and relics.

I recollect very well, when a child, looking at the map (for this was a favourite amusement of mine), and seeing Namur,—and I recollect that I never saw it without wishing myself there. I can give no reason for this longing; but it was the recollection of this early predilection that determined me to go from St. Hubert to Liège by Namur.

When one thinks of visiting any place, the imagination of course forms some conception of its appearance,—and after we have visited it, the imaginative conception is not effaced by the real recollection; we have then two images in the mind,—the image of that which it really is, and the image of that which we conceived it to be,—and these oftentimes form a strange enough contrast: it generally happens, that the imaginary image is far superior to the image of truth; with respect to Namur, however, it was otherwise. Namur, is a town I like,—I like its ramparts,—I like its flat meadows, skirting the river Sambre,—I like the rugged heights that border the Meuse;—I like all the walks in its neighbourhood,—I like the church of the Jesuits,—the hôtel where I lived,—the waiter, and all the servants,—the

raven in the court-yard, and the black cat that sat and looked at it. But I had predetermined to be pleased with Namur. There is one thing however, which I dislike; the chief cause indeed, of my quitting the town. Now, if any of my readers have ever been at Namur, it will occur to them at once, what was the object of my dislike. There is an old tower in the middle of the town, wherein there is a bell, of great dimensions, but cracked; this bell, it is the custom, by ancient usage, to ring at five in the morning, as a summons to open the gates of the town,—and at nine at night, it rings again as a warning to shut them. To one who has never heard this bell, it is absolutely impossible to convey the slightest idea of the sound; indeed, it is a difficult matter to describe a sound in words. I can only say, that it is exceedingly loud, and exceedingly unmusical, and that it rings at most unseemly hours,—at five in the morning, the very time when one inclines to sleep the soundest; and at nine in the evening, when one has just begun supper, and when an interruption like this, produces the most unpleasant consequences. At the hotel where I lived, supper was placed on the table precisely a quarter before nine: and I very well recollect the looks and the exclamation, with which every one at the table d'hotè, at the hotel

d'Harschamp, laid down his knife and fork at the first twang: it rings during five minutes, and while it tolls, supper makes almost no progress. The looks of the company, I am unable to describe; but the exclamation was invariably "*sacre!*"

With Namur, I have some agreeable recollections; one, the Overture to *Tancredi*, which was played very frequently in the market-place, by the band of a Swiss regiment. But the pleasantest recollections, are those of the beautiful country that environs the town. Upon the Ardennes side there is a valley, where I used sometimes to pass many hours. It is perfectly uncultivated,—completely surrounded by rocks, partly wooded and partly naked; the entrance to it, is by a road excavated beneath the rock; but I used to descend from above, lowering myself by holding the trees and shrubs. I never saw elsewhere so great a profusion of wild flowers as I have seen in that valley. Being no botanist, I cannot tell their names, but I have counted between thirty and forty different kinds. In this valley, one is as much alone as in a valley of Nubia; it is called *la petite Siberie*. There are many other beautiful walks in the neighbourhood of Namur,—especially those upon the banks of the Meuse and the Sambre; the one, presenting every variety of the

picturesque; and the other, all manner of gentle beauty. There is, indeed, no mood of the mind that may not be indulged in the neighbourhood of Namur, by wandering through scenery accordant with its tone. If the mind be in the mood of pensive musing, seek the little valley,—sit down in its depths,—no sound will reach you; if you would sympathise with nature in her gayest features, stroll upon the banks of the river, and meet the country people going to market; or if you be more gloomy than pensive, and would not willingly dissipate the gloom, plunge into the thick woods that stretch over the hills which separate the Meuse from the Sambre; you will come to a deep solitary dell, where there is a small still lake, seldom ruffled but by the falling leaf, and never visited but by the wild creatures of the forest.

Of the 4937 inns and hotels, wherein, during my life, I have breakfasted, dined, supped, and slept, the hotel D'Harschamp is beyond all comparison the best. I lived in it a fortnight; and never lived better, and seldom cheaper,—excepting at Pest, where one may board and lodge for £12 a-year, and have a bottle of Hungarian wine every day.

I have mentioned, in some former part of this volume, that the government of the Netherlands is unpopular; and I cannot help here saying a few

words more upon the subject, because I had ample opportunities at Namur, of learning the opinions of the mercantile body. Complaints were loud and general; *le commerce ne va pas*, was in everybody's mouth; *et pourquoi?* The public burdens are intolerable; the restrictions upon the trade with France, illiberal and impolitic; and the encouragement given to English manufacture, ruinous. Were it not for the connexion of William the Third with Russia and Prussia, both of which powers would doubtless support the king of the Netherlands against any revolutionary movement, I feel convinced, that the first revolution in Europe would take place in that country.

The view from the *pont de la Meuse*, at Namur, is singularly beautiful; you look up the river and down the river, and see as sweet a diversity of natural beauties as it is well possible to conceive. A view upon a river is not the most beautiful when the banks rise abruptly from the water; it is this difference between the scenery of the Rhine and the Meuse, that in my mind, establishes the superiority of the latter. The hills which border the Meuse, are generally retiring,—leaving some pretty meadows betwixt them and the stream;—whereas, the steeps which inclose the valley of the Rhine, are generally in contact with

the water. I have no hesitation whatever, in giving a decided preference to the Meuse for its greater variety of picturesque scenery; but I shall speak farther of this in the course of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Namur to Liège.—A Spring-day's Walk.

I LEFT Namur on the morning of as lovely a day as ever belonged to the spring, to walk down by the side of the Meuse to Huy,—there to sleep, and then to go on to Liège. The sky was all blue, excepting some small white clouds that were sailing along; a light west wind, or rather air, came in little puffs, such as might just lift the curl from a fair cheek.

I quitted the town by a little road, that skirts the heights above the valley of the river. Below, are numerous little gardens, and many sweet country houses; it seemed almost summer; the full chorus of blackbirds was ascending from the valley below; the meadows wore the aspect of green summer; the thin smoke from the cottages wreathed slowly up into the still air; the lark

poised himself on his glad wing; and the almost cloudless sky canopied all.

The pervading spirit of the spring is gladness; and I feel it within me. There is, in the contemplation of reviving nature, a buoyancy and stirring of hope, that makes the heart beat lighter, and calls a smile even into the countenance of the drooper. Is it, that the changing season seems to shadow forth the mystery of existence, and to be a symbol of man's bright destiny?—that when he sees the living principle springing out of apparent corruption, and the energies of vitality putting forth their power in the midst of decay, and life rising out of death, he perceives more clearly the promise of his eternity?—and that hope sympathizes with the rejoicings of spring? Be this as it may, I ever experience a bounding sensation of gladness, when my spirit communes with nature in the opening of the year.

There is no walk in Europe more beautiful than that along the banks of the river Meuse to Liège. Here, lying in a sheltered nook, you come upon some little village, with its simple church spire and trees, and houses all mingling together: there, some antique chateau stands perched upon an impending rock, round whose base the river sweeps broad and smooth; now the rugged banks rise precipitously from the stream, covered

to the summit with every species of tree and shrub, the road skirting their base or hewn out of their sides: then, the banks recede,—presenting a beautiful opening of rich fields and plantations, and clustered cottages, and distant towns. Once, by the way, a dark and ancient fortified town is seen, with its walls and massy castle, looking grimly down upon the river. At length, the whole prospect opens; the river widens, forming itself into lakes, and leaving green and wooded islands, and bearing on its glassy breast numerous barks and boats; the heights fall back to a distance; the country swells into knolls, richly variegated with gardens and orchards, and covered with smiling habitations; and far away, rising as if from the broad river, the city of Liège stands in pinnacled grandeur.

In that day's walk, from Namur to Liège, spring was somewhat further advanced than it usually is at this season; for the hedge-rows were quite green, and here and there shewed indications of hawthorn; and the oaks had half unfolded their green buds; everywhere, the latest of the spring flowers were laying

> Their fairy gems beside the giant tree.

The voice of the cuckoo and the plaint of the stockdove mingled together; and had it not been,

that the mountain-ash was yet bare, and that the presence of the cuckoo still indicated the spring, and that the chorus of love was loud in the grove, you would, from the mildness of the air, and the hue of the heavens, have said, that it was "the leafy month of June."

In a day like this, it is all one where we walk; there is beauty everywhere,—whether our walk be over the meadow, or through the forest,—across the heath, or even by the highway. In the meadow, the daisy, and its gaudier sister arrayed in yellow, we press at every step, while the odorous cowslip hangs on every knoll. In the wood, little families of primroses lie in sweet society upon each sloping bank, while the bashful violet lurks beneath them. On the heath, flowerets, of wondrous minuteness and of exquisite beauty, spring up beneath our feet; and in the hedge-rows by the highway, our sight and our smell are alike fed by the beauty of the wild rose, and the perfume of the sweet-brier.

I remember another day similar to this; it was somewhere in Bavaria. I spent the day with my fishing rod, by a sweet pastoral stream.

I met no angler all day, and caught no fish; but that gave me no uneasiness,—I scarcely tried to catch them; sometimes I paused at a fine curl of the stream, and threw my line,—but I was

generally too much abstracted to hit the moment when the trout leaped; and, besides, I several times fixed my hook among the stones, and was obliged to break my line, not being so ardent in my pursuit as to wade in and disentangle it. This gave me an excuse for resting; for it was necessary (bearing as I did the outward character of an angler), not to be seen with a broken, hookless line dangling from my rod; so I sat down upon the green bank, and busied myself in the work of reparation; often indeed lifting my eyes, and forgetting my occupation,—drinking in every sound and smell that are most sweet in nature.

I cannot say, that the carrying a fishing-rod and a basket adds much to one's enjoyment; but then, it gives one a character, which is something. A wanderer by a stream, without any apparent pretext for wandering, is nobody: the world, which cannot enter into the secret thoughts that fill the heart of a solitary lover of nature, nor conceive the thousand emotions of love, and tenderness, and elevation, and even rapture, that at times come over the soul of him, thus mysteriously communing with the external world, looks with something of suspicion upon the man who seems to have no distinct object in pursuit, and fancies him to be bereft either of his character or his reason.

It is a curious fact, and not perhaps very easily accounted for, that poets have ever been addicted to angling. The mere act of catching the fish cannot be agreeable to the gentle-hearted (and every poet must needs be so); but then, in every thing connected with angling there is a great deal of poetry. One is always led by a stream, among the fairest of nature's scenes, and there is time for contemplation, and no bustle or noise, as in other kinds of sports; and, with regard to the catching of fish, I think the repugnance is speedily overcome; and for this reason,—men have much closer sympathies with all other animals than with fishes; for, in the first place, the former are constantly before his eyes, and he necessarily, therefore, becomes familiar with them; and secondly, there is much of a common nature betwixt man and the brute creation. They live in the same element with him; they eat and drink like him,—many of them even eat of the same food,—they walk and lie down; and are affected by heat and cold, and live even in habitations; and then, all this is, every hour of the day brought palpably before the senses; even the affections are to a certain degree common to both. But, with regard to fishes, all this is reversed; they are rarely visible in a living state, and almost never in a state of natural and glad existence: they are

never the companions of man; there is little in their nature common with that of man; but, above all, their external aspect is so completely removed from that of rational beings, that a man when he looks upon a fish, refuses his sympathy. The hare, the deer, even the bird, have in their faces an expression, either of intelligence or innocence; but the expression of a fish is the very opposite of both; it has no affinity with that of any countenance which is usually presented to us. These reasons unriddle the apparent mystery, —why the most tender-hearted among men should be able to engage in this apparently cruel amusement.

I think it was from Bavaria, that I made this excursion into the human mind; let me return from it. I have been sitting all this while upon a stone, mending my line; and, indeed, I have sat so long, and loitered so much, that I must wind up my line and my story together.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Being a Chapter upon Chapters.

It is wonderful, what an advantage there is in breaking one's narrative into chapters; without them, a book cannot but be heavy. They are, to the author, what houses to bait at, are to the traveller,—resting-places, where we rally, and set off from, with a freshness which was not felt a minute before. But there is an error in this simile, which perhaps the reader might not have discovered, but which I will be so candid as to point out. A traveller, who baits at houses, stops, sits down, and rests himself: now, I cannot tell what may be the practice with other authors: but as for me, I no sooner finish one chapter, than I begin another. I lose no more time than merely in looking back to see the

number of the foregoing chapter, and then I proceed with the next. The titles of the chapters do not occupy me a moment, because I add these when the book is finished. But having pointed out an error in my last simile, I must substitute a better—viz: writing a book without chapters, is like travelling along a straight road; we look back, and we look forward; but there is nothing to mark our progress: whereas, writing a book in chapters, may be compared to travelling upon a road full of turnings; every turn brings fresh vigour, for there is one point gained, and another to gain. I cannot tell how it may be with other travellers any more than with other authors, but Heaven shield me from straight roads, or books without chapters.

CHAPTER XXV.

Liège—Some Observations upon Horses, and other Animals.

THEY talk of smoke, and black towns in England —Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, and others; but Liège is the blackest of all the black towns that ever consumed coal—*noir, noir, noir!* It cannot of course be expected that I should describe Liège; for my tour being entitled, a tour through the unfrequented parts of the Netherlands, and Liège being almost as well known as Lyons, it would be absurd for me to say much, if any thing at all about it.

Strangers are particularly well received at Liège; but the *modes* of society are so dull and uniform, that unless one has been brought up to

them, Liège hospitality is more creditable to the bestower of it, than agreeable to the receiver. There is a pleasant proverb spoken of Liège:—They say it is the *hell* of women, because they lead laborious lives; the *purgatory* of men, because they are governed by their wives; and the *paradise* of monks, because they have good benefices. There are many somewhat similar sayings of other places,—such as of Paris, that it is the paradise of women, because there, they *may do* whatever they choose. Paradise now a days must have a different signification from that which it had 4000 years ago; for of old, it signified a place where women were not permitted to do whatever they chose. London has been called the *hell* of horses; though, for my part, I think the saying would apply better to Paris. The kindness of the English towards horses, does not seem at all in proportion with the character they have acquired for their admiration and fondness of them; but the fact is, this character has not been justly acquired. Every one who has been much in Germany, or who has any knowledge of the habits of German cavalry, will admit, that a compliment to the Germans upon their love of horses would be more just, than if paid to the English. A German and his horse are companions; they eat together; sleep together; and although

they cannot converse together, the German often addresses his four-footed favourite, and even at times reasons with him. This is one great cause of the excellence of German cavalry. It has often been remarked on service, that their horses are cared for at the expense of their masters.

The favour of man is generally divided between horses and dogs; all other animals come in for but a small share. I confess, however, that for my part, I prefer a cow to either; there is an inoffensive, good-humoured, look about that animal, and a gentle, mild expression in the eye, that I never could perceive in any other animal. There may perhaps, be some associations with pastoral scenery, that lead me to this preference; for there is certainly nothing which so highly contributes to its beauty, as straggling cattle grazing, or lying upon a meadow,—or above all, standing in a stream, of an evening,—upon such an evening as Berghem or Cuyp would show us upon canvas. Sheep are doubtless, also an adornment; but sheep are generally too little scattered; their colour does not harmonize so well with the hues of an evening landscape; indeed, there is too much similarity in their colour,—and there is a quick, restless expression in their eyes, not at all in unison with a contemplative scene; and their

very motions partake of this quickness;—cattle, on the other hand, frequently stand as if they were meditating. There is a look of abstraction about them. Neither horses, nor sheep, have any thing of this; they are almost always either cropping the grass, or gazing upon some palpable object; but cattle often assume the expression of reflection. Their different cries, too, must be taken into account: the bleating of sheep is pastoral; the lowing of cattle is musical also; I know of no sound that harmonizes so well with the fading landscape of a summer's eve, as the distant lowing of cattle, heard, ascending from the depth of some vale, while you sit upon a height, watching the dusk gradually creeping over the distant hills. Do we not also associate with the lowing of cattle, the simplicity of the country life, so much sweetened by the riches of the udder. Horses labour for us indeed, and the bread which we eat is at the expense of their toil,—but the association is not direct. Sheep afford clothing; but here the association is still more indirect, for it suggests wool-staplers, and wool-spinners, and machinery, and smoke, and dyers, and drapers, and God knows what,—whereas, a cow instantly suggests the pleasant frothy beverage,—the children and their porringers; the wholesome breakfast, and evening cottage repast; and all this, at the expense of no

toil; every thing connected with it, rather belonging to pleasure and pastime: the milking-maid with her pail, tripping to the meadow, singing all the while; the rustic gallant easing her of her load, on the road back; the churning and the cheese making, and all the rural things associated with the happiness of a country life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

An Incident,—and a Story.

It is well known, that the finest collection of shells in the world, is in the city of Liège, where it has been the admiration of travellers for the last hundred years. It was at one time in the archbishop's palace, but is now deposited in a public hall.

To look upon a collection of shells, will excite very different sensations in different minds. The conchologist will see in it a system,—and will esteem the different specimens, not according to their beauty but their rarity. The mere lounger will gaze upon it, as upon any thing else placed to attract the eye; while he who sees, in all the

works of nature, the hand of a Divine architect, will recognize, in the beauty and the order set before him, another proof of that infinite perfection, which, in stretching out the heavens, remembered also, to paint the lily of the field. But there is still another class of reflections, to which this contemplation may give rise.

When I saw, for the first time, this magnificent collection of shells, a multitude of strange imaginings came over me. I thought of the vast labour which must have been employed in searching for the thousands of individual specimens which formed it, and of the distant shores from whence they had been brought. Each individual shell had lain for centuries in the waters of the great deep, till thrown at length, by the constant motion of the waves upon the margin, they had lain there for, perhaps, centuries longer. I felt a desire to know something of the history of this collection, and put some questions upon the subject to the person who attended. "The immense collection," replied he, "which you see before you, and which consists of 137,000 specimens, is the fruit of one man's labour. About a hundred years ago, the Sieur Godolph, who had spent many years in the pursuit, sold the whole of this collection for 150,000 ducats; and his great-grandson, who resides in this city, possesses a

collection not much inferior to this, formerly the property also of the Sieur Godolph."

Soon after, I left the collection, and went home; but, for several days, I could think of nothing but the Sieur Godolph. I constantly figured him wandering upon the sea-shore, in distant climes, and stooping for shells; and I thought I would give a year's revenue of my estates, to know the history of the Sieur Godolph's peregrinations.

One evening, a little more than a week after I had seen the collection, and when my curiosity was beginning in some degree to diminish, I went out to walk on that fine quay, which extends along the river side from the bridge at Liège for nearly a mile, lined with trees all the way, and then ending in the beautiful boulevard which stretches a mile farther. I was keeping my eyes upon the houses as I walked along, intending to change the dull neighbourhood of the archbishop's palace for the bustle of the quay, if I should be fortunate enough to find lodgings. While thus occupied, the name 'Godolph,' printed upon a large bill, attracted my eyes, and I instantly stopped to read; the words of the announcement I do not recollect, nor is it material; but it was to the purport, that the great-grandson of the Sieur Godolph was about to dispose, by public auction, of the valuable collection of shells

which belonged to his great-grandfather, and that the sale would take place the next morning. This incident revived all my curiosity about the Sieur Godolph, and I did not fail to be punctual to the hour next day,—after having wandered in my sleep with the Sieur Godolph among unknown and distant strands, ever and anon, the shells crumbling to pieces as we lifted them up.

Fancy, when indulged, invests with interest, whatever may happen to be the object of it; and I found, on entering the house of the grandson of Godolph, that I was in some degree satisfying my longings. In the room I was shown into, there were already a few individuals, attracted by the sale. On every side, cases of shells were exhibited, and the walls of the room were almost entirely covered with worn-out sketches of foreign-looking landscapes and marine views, strange animals, birds and fishes, and savages in fanciful costume. Every thing around, bespoke the residence of a wanderer over the earth.

I had no intention of becoming a purchaser to any extent. I bought only one or two specimens. When the sale was over, the auctioneer said he was instructed to sell one other relic of the Sieur Godolph, if he found a purchaser who would give the price put upon it; if not, it should be sent to the city library. This relic was a manuscript, in

which were detailed his wanderings, and particularly the manner by which he became possessed of this vast and unrivalled collection of shells, which had enriched himself as well as the city of Liège. I instantly determined to become the purchaser, be the price what it might. No bidder appeared but myself: and I, accordingly became the owner of the manuscript, for a hundred ducats. It would be difficult for me to describe the pleasurable sensations which I experienced in finding myself on the eve of having my curiosity gratified. I instantly stuffed the manuscript into my pocket, and hurried home; and having unrolled my treasure, read—

THE PEREGRINATIONS

OF

THE SIEUR GODOLPH;

The Shell Gatherer.

I AM now an old man, verging on seventy; and for the last thirty years I have enjoyed all that my heart could desire,—thanks to the perseverance of my earlier days,—and thanks, also, to fortune. Here I sit, in my arm chair, musing over the incidents of my past life; and an eventful life it has been. "Frederick! you young rogue, take my pen; and write as I dictate to you; you have often asked me where I collected all those shells,—you shall now hear,—my old hand I find is rather too unsteady to write."

I was the youngest son of the Count Joffroi, and had two elder brothers. We lived in that old

chateau which stands upon the banks of the Meuse, near to Huy. Our table was every day graced with the game and the fish which the Count my father, and my eldest brother, killed; and with the vegetables that grew in the hanging garden. The revenue of my father only sufficed to pay taxes, and the feed of his horse, and the wages of old Joseph, and for powder and shot. My two eldest brothers entered into foreign service, and were killed in the wars; and when I had reached my twenty-fourth year, the Count, my father died, leaving me heir to his possessions, and burthened with his debts. I felt no inclination to vegetate as he had done; but determined to turn what I had into money, and go and seek my fortune. When my father's debts were paid, and the price of all that I had sold was collected, I counted a hundred and twenty Louis d'ors into my purse,—tied a string round it, shook hands with old Joseph; and with all my fortune in my pocket, saving my father's diamond ring, which I had upon my finger, I closed the little gate of the hanging garden behind me, and turning the corner of the rock upon which the chateau was built, lost sight of the house of my fathers. It was a fine buoyant sensation, that which I experienced in thinking that the world was all before me. I had never before been ten leagues

from home; I had a hundred and twenty pieces of gold in my purse, and I felt as if the world, and all its wealth, and all it could yield of pleasure, were at my disposal.

Nothing occurred to disturb those feelings during several weeks,—at the end of which time I found myself in Vienna, with my purse somewhat lighter, and not any nearer to Fortune than when I set out in quest of her.

Vienna was no place for an inexperienced youth, with a purse full of gold, and panting after the enjoyments in which life at that season of years is supposed to be prolific. During the forenoon and evening, I seldom left myself much leisure for thought,—but in the morning, reflections, gloomy enough, would break in upon me; and I used then to revolve, with much seriousness, upon my prospects; and my mind was unable to suggest any thing that might reasonably light up the future.

One evening, when I had returned to my lodgings earlier than usual, I began to reason with myself, thus. "I have been here, in Vienna, no less than four months, and have never taken one step towards providing against the future: what am I to do when my purse is empty?"—and, with some anxiety, I drew it from my pocket, and emptied its contents upon

the table: the table was immediately strewed with copper in place of gold. At first, I doubted the evidence of my senses. I rubbed my eyes, and then handled the pieces; sure enough they were copper,—all copper. The last time I had used my purse, was the night before, when, at a coffee-house in the Place San Joseph, I drank a bottle of Rhenish with a stranger. I recollected that I fell asleep, with my purse on the table, and my hand loosely over it,—that when I awoke it was late,—the stranger was gone,—and my heavy purse still under my hand.

I remained for some time in a stupor; I expected, indeed, to have found my purse lighter,—but to find myself pennyless! I started up, and rushed out of the house, to go to the Café where I had last been. It was now about three in the morning,—it was in the beginning of July, and the dawn had begun. I went at a quick pace, towards the Place San Joseph; and just in entering the square, a man, muffled up, but of whom I distinguished enough to convince me it was the stranger I suspected, hurried past me. I stopped, and spoke; he instantly paused, and turned round. "Young man," said he, "you seem flurried." "I may well be so," I replied; and I hastily related to him the circumstances under which he had met me. "Whom, then, do

you suspect?" said he, fixing upon me a penetrating look. The manner of the stranger increased my suspicions of him; now, I thought, was my opportunity; and it was probable, if not certain, that if I should lose sight of him now, it would be for ever. "I suspect you," I replied, and attempted to seize him by the collar. Quick as lightning, he drew a short poniard from under his cloak, and would have buried it in my bosom, had I not raised my arm in time to receive the blow upon it, where it inflicted a slight wound. I was a powerful young man, fully my adversary's equal; and after a desperate struggle, in which I felt that I was struggling for life, I wrested the weapon from him,—we both fell at the same instant; and the poniard, which I held in my hand, entered the stranger's side, and was buried in it to the hilt.

"Young man," said he, feebly, "your suspicions were just: I took your gold, and I would have taken your life had I been able; but it has happened otherwise. You will find your own in my purse, which is fixed to a girdle under my cloak; there is more in it than your's, but—" he spoke no more, a convulsive shudder passed over him, and life was extinct. The cloak had been torn in the struggle, and the purse was exposed to my eyes. I instantly tore it off.

No sooner did I find myself in possession of the purse, and standing beside the dead body of the stranger, than the peril of my situation came with its full force to my mind. No one in Vienna knew me; here was a man murdered, the bloody poniard (which he had himself drawn from his side) lying on the ground, and myself standing by, with a purse of gold in my hand; circumstances seemed so strongly against me, that it was madness to remain a moment, for the morning had so broke, that the whole affair might have been seen; and yet, to fly, would be to proclaim myself the criminal. In either case I felt that crime would fix itself upon me, and that I must pay the penalty. While thus wavering as to how I should act, to escape the danger which seemed inevitable, and almost determined to throw down the purse and its contents by the side of the stranger, and hurry away, I saw the door of the coffee-house, whither I had been going, open, and the master come out, and walk towards me. I waited for him, and as he came up, instantly began to relate my story. "This," said he, interrupting me, before I had quite concluded, "is very well composed in so short a time, but I witnessed the whole affair; never was there an honester gentleman, than he who lies there dead,—I have lost a good customer in him.

I saw you meet him; I saw you attempt to seize him; and fight with him; and now, I see him murdered, and you, standing, with the purse which I know to be his, in your hand: who do you suppose will credit your story? you will be sent to the galleys, or to the scaffold, that's certain."

I felt, that the man spoke with but too much reason, and that his story, and the circumstances together, must condemn me. "But," said he, "harkye! no one has seen this business but me; if my word can bring you to the gallows, it can save you from it too; divide the gold with me; I will swear he attacked, and would have robbed you, and will bring you off." I felt the extraordinary, and dreadful alternative to which I was reduced. This man's evidence would convict me; I must either run the almost certain risk of suffering as a criminal, or acknowledge that I had robbed and murdered, and share my gold with a villain, to purchase his silence. The struggle was but momentary; I would not proclaim myself a villain, even to one man, although none other on earth suspected me. "No," said I, "do your worst; I will rather lose my own, than lie myself into infamy." I threw down the purse, and hurried off, leaving my accuser in precisely as critical a situation, as that in which I stood before he came up to me.

This reflection did not occur to me at the time: I had no idea, that in thus acting upon my own feelings of honour, I was leaving the other to the very fate which I dreaded; but so it turned out. Many years afterwards, when I returned through Vienna, feeling an inclination to renew the sensations which I had before experienced (for there is at times, a strange pleasure in renewing the recollection of critical scenes), one evening, I went in disguise to the Café, in the place St. Joseph; and upon making inquiries respecting Frederick Hoërder,—the former host,—I learned, that about twelve years ago, he had been tried, and executed, on account of an atrocious murder which he had committed for the sake of plunder, upon a gentleman who had been in the habit of frequenting his house. This intelligence, at first strangely agitated me. The man had suffered unjustly; but when I reflected upon his character, and still more, when I considered, that the fate of this man would assuredly have been mine, I could not regret, that Hoërder (who was, at all events more guilty than I was), had met punishment in my stead.

But to return,—I hurried from the spot, and went at a rapid pace, without any other object, than to get far from the scene in which I had been unintentionally so prominent an actor.

There was a strange discrepancy between my feelings, and the aspect of every thing around me. The sun had risen, and gilded with his morning beams, the tops of the spires and pinnacles of the palace, which lifted themselves into the calm morning air. All was hushed,—the city was yet buried in deep sleep: but my own mind, although, thank God! strong in innocence, was fearfully agitated by doubt and danger.

After a rapid walk, I found myself approaching one of the gates of the city. It was not yet open; I loitered about, troubled with the most uneasy sensations, until I could be permitted to pass. Fortunately, but a few minutes elapsed, before five chimed on the clock of the great cathedral. This was the signal for opening the gates. I passed out, and no one questioned me. I walked as rapidly as I could, consistently with the danger of exciting suspicion, across the open space which lies between the city and the suburb, and soon found myself upon the banks of the river, and close to a pier, upon which two men were employed in detaching a cable which moored a boat to the shore; and from the bustle upon deck, and the appearance of several passengers, it seemed on the point of dropping down the river. I stepped into it, and the next moment we were in the middle of the stream, and rapidly leaving the city behind us.

I had not been many minutes in the boat, when the master came up to me to receive his fare, asking the distance which I intended to go. I was equally unable to comply with the demand, as unprepared to answer the question. I had not one copeck in my possession; and as to telling whither I was going, I did not even know the boat's destination. After a moment's pause, I said, that I had no convenient coin; but putting into his hands, a handsome gold watch, which I had purchased when I came to Vienna, I told him to keep it till he was satisfied; but perceiving my appearance and furniture to belong to a person of some consideration, he refused the pledge, observing that I could pay the fare at Presburg, Raab, or Buda, as I liked best, or at whatever place I should leave the boat.

In a short time, we had left all traces of the metropolis behind, and were gliding noiselessly, but swiftly, from the recent scene of blood and peril.

It is a surprising effect, that which is produced upon unquiet feelings, by the serenity of nature. Where remorse does not mingle with these, the beauty and calmness of the external world, can cheat us of our misfortunes, and almost reconcile us to our fate, however dark it may be. It was not three hours, since I had stood beside the dying

stranger, with almost no hope of escape from the gibbet; and now, I was going, I knew not whither; without money, without object, without a friend,—but I was young, I was in health, and all nature looked so joyful, that I felt as if I had been upon an excursion of pleasure, with my purse full of gold.

I soon discovered, from the conversation of those around, that the boat was bound for Belgrade, and I spoke as if that were also my destination. I will not detail the particulars of the voyage; suffice it to say, that on the afternoon of the fifth day, we came in sight of Buda,—the hill and castle illuminated by the setting sun, which had already left the city to the shades of evening: here I determined to dispose of my diamond ring. I told the master of the boat, I should sleep on shore, and as I was considerably in his debt, I insisted upon leaving my watch in his hands: my ring was therefore my only resource; I was loth to part with it, but there was no room for hesitation.

Every one who has been in Buda, must recollect the long narrow street that runs up from the river into the heart of the town*. I had not

* It must be recollected, that the Sieur Godolph, speaks of Buda as it was a hundred years ago: there is now a handsome modern street, in place of that which he found.

proceeded very far up this street, when I descried, through a window, a person engaged in working jewels. It so happened, that my evil genius had conducted me to the shop of one of the most unprincipled villains in all Hungary; he had gained enormous riches by his evil practices and extortions,—and by means of his wealth, had acquired great influence in the city where he lived. I pulled my ring off my finger, and putting it into his hand, demanded the value of it. He looked first at the ring, and then at me, and alternately for several moments, at the one and at the other. He saw by my appearance, and knew by my dialect, that I was not of his city; and probably guessed, that I had arrived by the boat, which regularly stops at Buda on those days, and about that hour. After examining the ring attentively for several minutes, he snapped it in two with an instrument by which he had held it, and let the pieces drop into a box full of other jewels. "How now?" cried I, and I attempted to seize him; but he jerked himself out of my grasp, and out of his shop, the door of which closed behind him with a spring lock. I immediately heard him call out loudly, several times, "thieves, thieves!" and in a few moments he re-entered, accompanied by half a dozen others, who laid hold on me, and without listening to a word, hurried me off to prison.

At an early hour the next morning I was brought to the hall of justice, where the jeweller appeared in the character of my accuser. "This man," said he, "came into my shop late yesterday evening, where, as is my custom, I was working, after all the other merchants had shut their doors,—and, under pretence of asking me to value a worthless bauble, he attempted to snatch from me a diamond ring, which I held in my forceps, and was examining with a magnifying-glass, and which broke in the struggle. Here is the ring, which he asked me to value; and there are the pieces of the ring, which he attempted to take from me; his own ring is not worth six ducats, while this other is worth not less than two hundred."

It was in vain that I protested my innocence, and declared the villany of my accuser; it was in vain that I told my story, and requested that the captain of the boat in which I sailed should be sent for, to corroborate my detail. "That," said my accuser, "is an impossible demand, since the boat has sailed six hours ago; and besides, (added he) is it likely that a man, with not one cruitzer in his pocket, should be possessed of jewels of such value?" In short, this reasoning prevailed, and I was on the point of being condemned to the galleys, when a thought struck

me. "Hold!" said I to the judge, "I have yet something to say, that will prove my accuser a liar, and myself an injured man. You have, in your own hands, the pieces of the broken ring which he says is his; bid my accuser tell, of how many diamonds his ring is composed; if the ring be indeed his, he cannot fail to know this, since he has, in your hearing, put a value upon the ring." My accuser hesitated; but at last ventured to say, that the chief value of the ring lay in the large diamond in the centre, and that of the others he had taken little note. "Then," said I, addressing the judge, "I know more of a ring, which, according to his account, I have seen but for a moment, than he himself knows of his own ring—the ring is composed of nine diamonds; and in place of the centre jewel being the most valuable, there is a flaw in it. Now," continued I, "ask my accuser, if there be any writing in the inside of his ring." Upon this question being put, my accuser answered, that there was writing; but that, as writing did not alter the value of a ring, he had never taken the trouble to decipher it. "Then," said I, "if my accuser be in the right, and the ring his, I must have been able in one moment, and that, a moment of struggle, to perceive what he has never discovered even through a magnifying glass—in

the inside is rudely scratched the word *Godolph*." The roguery of my accuser was now so plain, that even his wealth and influence were insufficient to turn altogether the scale; though they hindered the execution of deserved punishment. "I decree," said the judge, "that this stranger be paid by his accuser double the value which he has himself set upon the ring;"—and, before leaving the court, I put into my pocket four hundred ducats.

[There is here a gap of seventeen leaves in the journal of the Sieur Godolph. These must have contained the history of his peregrinations, from the time when this adventure ended, as we have seen above, until the Sieur is on the eve of sailing for India]. The journal proceeds again thus.

I shall assuredly, said I to myself, find a vessel at this port bound for India, whither I may go and traffic with my gold. I walked on until I reached the quay, which is very long and forms a crescent, and here I determined to abide until I should find a ship bound for India. My inquiries were soon successful; and, in less than a week, the port of Marseilles was lessening behind me.

I had ample leisure, during my voyage, for reflecting upon the eventful life which I had led since quitting my paternal house. Hundreds, similarly situated, have passed on without the

occurrence of a single event to interrupt the calm of life. I seemed a remarkable example of the changeful destiny which attends upon some individuals. The most trivial causes had to me produced the most uncommon events; circumstances which, in the lives of others, would have led to nothing, or to a jest, had put me in jeopardy of my life. Six times* I had been on the point of suffering death as a criminal, and been extricated from danger by means as unpremeditated as the circumstances which had led me into it; and now, once more, the world was before me. "God grant," said I, "that life may now flow smoother." But my prayer was not yet heard.

Fair winds continued to attend us through the Mediterranean sea, and the South Atlantic ocean; and without any disaster, we doubled the African cape. Our vessel being bound for Surat, which is the great emporium of the most precious productions of Hindoostan †, the most direct course into the gulf of Persia, lay through the

* It would appear from this, that during the time in which we have no account of the Sieur's peregrinations, he must have fallen into several other perils.

† The Journal of the Sieur Godolphi will be found frequently at variance with our present knowledge of facts. Surat is not now of the importance it was then, the great trade of the west of Hindoostan having been transferred to Bombay.

channel of Mozambique, between the island of Madagascar and the coast of Africa. Light airs accompanied our progress until we reached the gulf of Sofala, where we proposed to traffic a little with the natives on the African coast; and on the 11th of August we cast anchor in the channel, about two miles from shore.

It was the close of one of those fainting days which occur between the tropics: the sun was getting low in the horizon, and I was reclining upon deck, watching it slowly sink; suddenly I heard from below the cry of "Fire!" and, at the same instant, a crowd of sailors with horror-stricken faces, scrambled up the hatchway and rushed to the stern to lower the boat. I sprang to my feet, and followed them instinctively; but saw that the numbers were far too great for the frail vessel to which they were about to commit themselves; and that to embark in it would only be, to exchange one death for another,—not so horrible, perhaps, but no less sure. The mounting flames were already rising from the hold, and a moment's delay might be fatal; for the seas being infested with pirates, a large quantity of gunpowder was in the ship. There was a small boat floating, attached to the vessel by a rope; but it was so small that the crew thought it unworthy of consideration. I decided my part in a moment,

leaped into the sea, gained the little boat, unloosed the cable, and abandoned myself alone to the wide ocean.

Awful now was the scene: the sun had gone down, and there being little or no twilight between the tropics, I was soon in darkness, save the glare from the burning vessel. I saw, by the red flaring light, many hanging on its sides: these, the melting pitch soon forced to quit their hold, and I saw them drop, one by one, into the ocean; I saw a multitude fill the boat which I had abandoned,—and I saw it instantly sink with its living burthen, beneath the still waters. I heard at times from the burning vessel, the wild cry of terror and despair, mingle with the crackling of the flames; and I waited in silence for the explosion, which would leave me solitary, with night and the ocean around me. At last it came; the burst of light;—the deep heavy boom, that went like a swell along the water and the air; the large masses of light, mingled with darker bodies, flinging themselves up into the heavens, and then falling into the sea with a hissing noise, and disappearing, until every spark was extinguished; until all was hushed beneath the great waters; and pitchy darkness, and the silence of the grave, sat upon the bosom of the hungry deep.

Here, memory fails me; my desolate state was for a while forgotten, in sleep. I recollect only, that the high land, near to which the ship had anchored, and which, by the imperfect star-light of the southern hemisphere I could just discern, gradually disappeared. I had no instrument wherewith to assist my course, and lying down in the bottom of the little boat, I commended myself to Him, who had rescued me from an awful death, and who could yet preserve me;—and sleep came upon me.

I was awakened by a sudden concussion;—it was broad day; I raised myself up, and looked around; I was near the mouth of a river, and at but a short distance from shore. The rivers of Africa carry down much alluvial soil, forming sand banks on each side, and it was upon one of these, that my little vessel had drifted by the tide. I thanked God for my deliverance; and with little difficulty, gained the shore. It was a sandy shelving coast, and the tide had nearly retired. I sat down at a little distance from the margin, upon a dry sand hillock, and gazed around me. Before me, was the swelling ocean, of the greenish hue, which it usually wears in these regions, and glittering like a mirror; and below the shelving bank, the little impotent waves were running races on the almost level sand; but from these

my eye was speedily attracted by the beautiful and varied hues which sparkled upon the sand-bank, beneath the almost perpendicular rays of a tropical sun. This appearance, I found proceeded from innumerable marine productions upon which the yet recent wave had left a polish; and which, both in beauty and variety, exceeded all conceptions I had before formed of the wonders which are hidden in the ocean. From this instant, the bent of my future life was determined,—this instant, coloured the fortunes of my future years. I had seen, when in Vienna, a collection of shells and other marine productions, which was highly valued; but here, the labour of one hour would eclipse it. Here, Providence had cast my lot; and here, a new, and seemingly untrodden field lay before me*. It is impossible that any state can be imagined more utterly desolate than mine at this moment was; but in what I saw around me, I fancied I discovered the sources of future wealth,—and like the flowers that spring up in the regions of eternal snow, Hope, even in this moment, found entrance into my soul.

* It is probable, that the Sieur Godolph was the first who became acquainted with the riches of the coast of Mozambique in the department of conchology. Since his days however, it has been often explored by the conchologist, as well as by those who undertake to be his purveyors for the sake of gain.

I write this account of my life for the information of my children, and my grandchildren, that they may not be entirely unacquainted with him to whom they owe their fortunes; and for their use, that they may learn, how far trust in Providence, and perseverance in labour, accomplish their reward. In what I have already written, I have recorded the most eventful epochs of my life,—in the years which follow, fortune was less capricious.

It would be little interesting, to detail the monotonous lapse of the years which I spent upon this shore. I could speak indeed, of the native villages which lie along the coast, and of the simple inhabitants, who supplied me with the necessaries of life. I could tell of that new world, which nature unfolds in this tropical region; or retrace the changes, that time, as it wore away, wrought upon my feelings: but I refrain from all this.

There is no pursuit that will not, under certain circumstances, become a passion. To some, it may seem unaccountable, that days, months—nay, years, should be spent in wandering,—a solitary, along the sea coast, seeking for the productions which the waves had cast upon it; but I can say of a truth, that even without any hope of reward beyond the indulgence of my

passion, I could have spent my days contentedly, —even happily, thus employed. I longed for day, that light might enable me to renew my pursuit; I prolonged it, until the objects of my search were undistinguishable,—time, far from diminishing, served but to increase my ardour. I often would survey my accumulated treasures with a delight, not less than that with which I now gaze upon the gold which they have purchased: and, even after my labours had earned me independence, did I not, like another Sinbad, leave my domestic home, and become a wanderer again by the ocean-tide, among the remotest islands that stud the deep? But years have at last stolen upon me; and domestic quiet, though it cannot wean me from my longings, reconciles me to that repose, which enfeebled nature demands. But even now, could vigour again re-animate for a season, those limbs which have so often obeyed the impulses of my mind, I should again be Godolph the Shell-gatherer. Often in my sleep does imagination recall former scenes, or create new images out of the past. Often do I sit upon the shelving rock, and watch the distant ocean-swell approaching, or the little wave fretting beneath me; often am I hurrying at break of day, over the dry sand hillocks, to the sea beach,—or spreading in some sea-worn cavity, the fruit of my

day's labour, as the unclouded sun dips into the distant waters.

I have been a man of many climes: my race is nearly run.

I shut the manuscript,—but the recollection of Godolph long continued to haunt me. I could not dismiss him from my mind. I had read more extraordinary lives, and more interesting adventures than his; but the wanderings of the solitary Godolph the Shell-gatherer, have often since recurred to my imagination with a distinctness, which belongs only to the things that are real.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Liège.

At Liège, I had every reason to be satisfied; for I had one or two acquaintances, through whom I might have had the *entrée* of every house in town worth having an *entrée* to; but it was card playing every where,—young and old play cards; and I found a degree of ceremony about the usages of society, extremely disagreeable. With one of the noblemen, whose acquaintance I had made while residing at St. Hubert,—the Comte de Rosen,—I passed some pleasant days. He gave good dinners; his wife was a pretty, affable woman, and her box at the theatre was always open to me. At the hotel d'Holland, where I resided, I

lived comfortably,—well,—and cheaply,—and good society was every day to be found at the public table. After dinner, good musicians almost always introduced themselves,—singers, and players upon the harp and violin; they had generally the good taste to play and sing Italian music,—and the company had the good taste to listen to it, in place of calling for their own country music, as the French do upon like occasions.

After dinner, too, there was generally a little trial of skill introduced, for the purpose of producing a bottle or two of prime wine, such as Chambertin: the skill was shown thus; an apple was stuck upon a fork, and handed round the company; each person took the fork in one hand, holding up the apple,—and with the other, tried to strike off a slice from it with his knife at one blow, and without the apple falling from the fork; the person in whose hands the apple fell was fined a bottle of wine: success in this trial depended chiefly upon the sharpness of the knives, and the strength of the nerves; I have seen it tried elsewhere than at Liège, and I never recollect of the apple falling in my hands.

The country round Liège is pleasant—very pleasant; there is one difficulty however, which

accompanies walking in the vicinity. The country is so intersected by streams, chiefly by arms of the river Ourte, which falls into the Meuse here, that one's course is constantly obstructed. This, I think, finishes all I have to say of Liège.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Liège to Spa—Spa—Improvements—False Taste—The Liberality of the King.

THERE is nothing I dislike more than little towns; where, do as you will, you always get into the same street,—such as Bath; where, in whatever direction you set out, Melsom-street is sure to be fallen in with, before you return: or Liège; where, whatever pains you take to escape it, you are sure to be brought into the square in front of the Archbishop's palace. I found it impossible, on that account, to remain in Liège;—I determined, therefore, to go to Spa. This resolution I took one evening about six o'clock; and instantly adopted it, by asking the road out of

town, and setting off upon my journey. It was soon dark,—and then moonlight; I cannot, therefore, say much about the country; and as for Spa, everybody has been there, and therefore I shall pass right through it.

Of all places, I dislike watering places the most of any. I hate them during *the season*, as it is called; and I hate them out of the season. During the season, there is a painful mingling of the sad and the gay; the natural infirmities of the body, or the diseases which are incident to it, are brought into constant contact with the frivolities of the gay and unthinking: one class comes to put off death for a little, or to make life endurable;—another comes to forget death altogether, and yet to get through life as quickly as possible. On the other hand, when it is not *the season*, there is a painful disproportion between the design and the filling up,—between the external aspect of things, and their reality; there is the semblance of a feast, without any one to sit down to it,—or of a banquet-hall, from which the guests have departed. Besides, the environs of watering places usually owe every thing to art; they are always dressed up and arranged; nature generally does little for them,—and in place of improving nature, which is sometimes possible, art is entirely substituted in its room. A zig-zag

path, a mile in length, is made upon a slope, one hundred yards square; temples, grottos, and summer houses, are every where stuck down, to delight and surprise,—little sixpenny brooks are made to represent the fall of mighty waters by dint of mirrors; you have a drive here, and a promenade there, with formal rows of young trees on either side; museums, and collections of pictures, and cabinets of curiosities obsequiously present themselves at every turn,—and there is altogether so wretched an assemblage of cockney preparation, that one might easily suppose the whole to be contrived by some city draper owning a box at Hampstead.

Such is Spa: I was there when it was *not* the season, and I have no desire to be there when *it is*. Beyond the circle of this cockneyism, there is nature unadorned; and on the German side, incapable of adornment. I hardly know a wilder prospect than that which strikes the eye when you ascend about four miles above Spa, in the direction of Germany: dark-coloured, desolate heath, mingled with moss; dark, heathy mountains; and dark, turbulent streams. Stavelot is, I think, the acmé of wildness; it is fourteen miles from Spa, situated in a basin among the barren hills, and from the spot I have named, you see the hills that surround it. The ruins of the

castle of William de la Merck, lie at no great distance from it. I have no doubt, that in time, the empire of art will extend itself in the neighbourhood of Spa, and most people would probably consider this to be an improvement; for my own part however, I would rather ascend one of these dark, heathy hills in my own way, than follow any cut path which could be devised for rendering the ascent easier. I need not say indeed, that the empire of art will *probably* extend, for the king of the Netherlands, being an amateur of gravel walks, and thinking it best that his subjects who go to drink his Spa waters, should not over-fatigue themselves among his hills, has generously ordained, that all the pickings of his liege subjects' pockets should be applied to the purposes of improvement;—in other words,—that the gains at the *rouge et noir* table, during *the season*, which his Majesty might himself pocket, shall be laid out in improving and beautifying the neighbourhood of Spa. This is indeed princely.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A Digression upon Rouge et Noir.

MUCH nonsense has, in my opinion been written and spoken upon the subject of rouge et noir. We have been told a thousand times, that the table must *necessarily* gain; and that ruin must in the end, overtake every one who attempts to make his fortune by this game. To the latter of these positions, I subscribe; but from the former, I as unhesitatingly dissent. When I say, that the table does not gain from the superior chances it possesses,—I do not mean to ascribe its gains to the unskilfulness of the players. I believe on the contrary, that if by skilfulness, is meant, knowledge of the game, no extent of knowledge, —no calculation of chances,—no system founded

upon the longest experience, will ensure ultimate success. But this, I do mean to say, that an even temper, and moderate hopes, accompanied by a sound judgment, and attended by constant vigilance, will reap a moderate harvest against all the superior advantages possessed by the table. That such a harvest is gathered by several individuals in Paris, is certain,—I have been myself acquainted with two; one, a Frenchman,—the other, a Scotchman, who had realized a small independency in the West Indies, and who resided in Paris, spending the greater part of every day at Frescatis. The system pursued by these two individuals, was entirely opposite, and yet, each attained his object. The former of these gentlemen, the Scotchman, was such a man as I have described above,—possessed of a temper, which nothing could ruffle,—of firmness which could be moved neither by success nor adversity,—of discretion which could never be led away by hope, and which yet was incapable of degenerating into cowardice;—and to all this was added, a vigilance of judgment, which at once discovered the opportunity,—and a promptness of decision, that never permitted it to escape. But that which above all contributed to ensure the success of this individual, was his moderate wishes. He did not enter the room to make a fortune, but to

get a luxurious dinner at the Rocher de Cancale. His own means could afford *côtelettes au Maintenon*, in his lodgings in the Rue d'Artois, but not *soupe d' Amande*, &c. at the Rocher de Cancale;—and being much of a *gourmand*, this, as he stated to me, was his sole reason for paying a daily visit to Frescatis; ten francs were the amount of his daily winnings, and no golden opportunity could ever prevail upon him to make another trial after he had put that sum into his pocket.

The other individual I have mentioned, the Frenchman, followed a different plan. His success was not owing to the combination of mental qualifications which the Scotchman possessed,—but to this single rule, never to lose beyond a certain sum, but to gain as much as fortune would permit. He attended the room only once a week,—and without paying any attention to the state of the game, deposited his stake, which was invariably five Napoleons: if he lost it, he immediately retired; if he gained, he permitted his doubled stake to remain upon the table, during three more turns of the cards; so that, if fortune stood by him, his five Napoleons at the end of the fourth turn had become eighty; and with this success he was contented. If fortune proved favourable but once in every nine visits to the table, his gains would amount to thirty Napoleons

every two months. It is quite evident, that the gamester who never allows fortune to deprive him of more than a certain limited sum,—but who has courage to stand by fortune as long, and no longer, than she will stand by him, must inevitably be successful. The gamester, in this way, forces the chances in his favour; for it must be recollected, that the superior chances of the table depend upon a *continuance* in play, and have not the slightest influence upon the fortunes of the player who risks but one stake in the week. I do not suppose any thing I have said, will lead the reader to make trial of gaming as a profession; ten shillings per day is but a sorry recompense for a lifetime wasted,—for premature grey hairs,—and banishment for life. If it be asked, "why do you limit the possible gains to ten shillings; why not ten guineas?" I answer,—because, to gain so much, the day is too short if small stakes be deposited; and if the stakes be large, the player might possibly shrink from the risk at the very moment when courage would have ensured victory. I have no hesitation in repeating the assertion with which I begun the chapter, that the table does not gain *because of the preponderance of chances in its favour*; but because of the absence of certain mental qualifications in the players. Such a re-union of qua-

lities, as that possessed by the Scotch *gourmand*, exists rarely in one mind; and, therefore, although I be correct in my argument, the French contractors may calculate their gains just as surely as if it were otherwise; for no irritable man can become collected by a mere act of the will; nor a rash man become suddenly discreet, at the very moment when his passions are the most powerfully roused. I have known many instances of men, conscious of the infirmities which led them astray, who have laid down rules, and adopted systems of play, in the expectation that, by adhering to these, the imperfections which stood in the way of success, would be rendered innoxious; but in every one instance, the passions made a breach in the systems; and one after the other they were abandoned. But systems, founded upon supposed knowledge and experience, are all equally fallacious; and if pursued undeviatingly, will lead ultimately to ruin. I have known a man who has sat twelve hours at the table, day by day, for three years together, and marked every result during the whole of that period,—and who, having then begun to play, upon a principle founded upon this long experience, was ruined in a few months. I have myself seen his tables; and if the chances, which had produced certain results through three successive

years, had continued to operate a few months longer, his fortune would have been made in less time than he lost his all. But no system can be trusted to securely; because, chances have shorter and longer revolutions,—circles within circles;—ultimately, indeed, chances will be equalized,—but not, perhaps, within the period of a lifetime. To say that the powers of arithmetic are incapable of framing results, upon which a system of certain secure dealing with the rouge et noir tables may be formed, is more than any man dare assert; of this, however, I am certain, that the discovery would be a fortunate one; since it would annihilate a trade which blights the happiness of thousands, robs many of their just inheritance, and which has largely contributed to swell the bills of voluntary mortality.

I have been led into this long digression without any intention of digressing beyond a single sentence. As, however, my views upon the subject differ from those usually entertained, and are, besides, supported by facts, the reader will perhaps pardon the interruption of my narrative.

CHAPTER XXX.

A forced March.

My solitary walks have hitherto been voluntary; now, to *walk*, becomes a matter of necessity: but the change requires some explanation.

When resident at St. Hubert, I had employed the long evening hours in writing a little volume, which, about three years ago, was presented to the public under the title of Tales of Ardennes. The manuscript I carried with me to Liège, and from thence I transmitted it in a packet, addressed to *Bossange Bibliothèque, Rue de Richelieu, à Paris*, by whom I wished it to be printed, as I had not then any intention of soon visiting England. This packet was opened on

the frontiers, read, and re-transmitted to the authorities at Liège.

I have never been able to discover any thing heterodox in the volume, printed afterwards in England, from a re-written copy of the manuscript: but the heavy-headed Flemings had been of a different opinion; and it was deemed advisable to pay an official visit to the author. This, as will be immediately seen, was the cause of my quitting Spa, where I had otherwise intended to have passed the spring.

One morning, accordingly, a week after I had arrived at Spa, about six o'clock, I was surprised by a knock at my bed-room door, and, almost immediately after, by the entrance of a stranger. The precise conversation that passed between us I do not recollect, but his communication was to this purpose:—that he had learned, from undoubted authority, at the hotel d'Hollande, where I had resided when at Liège, and to which he was attached in the capacity of a valet de place, that inquiries had been made for me the evening before, by a person deputed by the commissary,—that the intention was, to pay me an official visit in the course of this day; and that the reason of my having suddenly become a person of so much consequence, was owing to the seizure of a manuscript, sent by me to Paris, and which manuscript,

I was informed, contained some political heresies. This information placed me in an awkward predicament. I knew, indeed, that any charge against me founded on the principles of the manuscript, must have originated in ignorance or mistake, and would come to nothing; but then, I knew that I had no passport, and might be put to serious inconvenience and useless expense, from being unable to produce any official account of myself, when lying under a charge of this nature, however frivolous and unfounded; and I, therefore, instantly determined to make use of the information I had received, and set off for England.

This was rather a bold determination for a person in my circumstances. The last remittance I had received, was at Namur, and the next, I had desired to be sent to Spa; but it wanted about a week of the period when I might expect it. I had, unfortunately, the day before paid a bill to a tailor, and had thus reduced my finances to the trifling sum of eighty francs. My week's bill at the hotel was to pay, and a remuneration to be given to the informer; nevertheless, I determined to carry my plan into effect. I gave my informer a Napoleon,—this reduced my funds to sixty francs, —having made an agreement at the hotel for twenty-five francs per week, and adding ten francs

for wine, &c., I supposed I might be due thirty-five francs, which sum I wrapt up in a piece of paper, addressed to the hôtel keeper, and deposited in a drawer in my bed-room; and I had then left twenty-five francs to carry me from Spa to Dover, a distance of not less than a hundred and eighty miles. This scrupulosity in discharging my bill at the hotel, was not indeed absolutely necessary; for, having brought with me a recommendatory letter from a near relative, Mr. Henry D. Erskine (nephew of the late Lord Erskine), with whom I had been residing in Paris; and who, with his family, had passed a winter in that hotel at Spa, I might not only have been excused discharging my bill just at that moment, but might also, I have no doubt, have been supplied with what money I had occasion for on my journey. But I was anxious that no person should be acquainted with my motions, or be the confidant of my plans.

Having adjusted all these preliminaries, and fixed in my own mind the plan of my proceedings, I took breakfast; and immediately afterwards, without saying a word to any person, left the hotel. It was then about eight in the morning. The ground was covered about three inches deep with snow, from a recent fall; but it had thawed on the surface, and the air was mild, with every

appearance of fine weather. I had pre-determined not to go direct to Liège, but first to Verviers, by which I knew there was a road to Liège, although greatly farther.

It is surprising what a change was instantaneously produced in my mind, by the sudden resolution, instantly adopted, of returning to my own country. Had I been asked three hours before, what were my future plans, I should have said, "I shall remain six weeks at Spa,—I shall then go to Aix la Chapelle, and after remaining there for perhaps a month, I intend proceeding north-east through all Germany as far as Dantzic, and from thence I shall embark for St. Petersburgh." But all the vague thoughts and indistinct images, which had been engendered in my mind by contemplating these and other designs, some of them large enough to fill up a lifetime, were in an instant annihilated; and home, that I had not visited for six years,—and realities which once had been, and might be again,—and a host of thoughts, that do not belong to the region of imagination, and half-formed hopes; but to the empire of affection, and reality, crowded upon my mind, and made me feel as if I had suddenly entered upon a new existence;—no longer a solitary wanderer, feeding upon dreams,—but a being bound by ties, and susceptible of sym-

pathies. I well recollect with what speed these feelings hurried me along the straight avenue that leads from Spa,—the tears running down my cheeks all the while.

So buoyant and excited was the state of my mind, that the state of my finances gave me no concern. I said to myself, "I am certain I shall reach home somehow;" and as I jingled my twenty-five francs in my pocket, I felt that it was nothing to have a light purse, if one possessed a light heart along with it. It was necessary, however, to lay down the most rigid system of economy. I calculated, that to reach Calais by way of Brussels, Ghent, Bruges and Dunkirk (for not having a passport, I could not pass by the nearer way through France), would occupy at least five days at thirty-two miles a day, which, at this season, was as far as one could have the advantage of daylight. This calculation allowed five francs per day; for, at first, I thought it unnecessary to make any provision for expenses beyond Calais, where I felt assured of a supply; but, in case of disappointment, I restricted myself to three francs per day, by which I should ensure a reserve of ten francs at Calais.

The Netherlands is a very cheap country to travel in, *in a certain way*. I believe a pedestrian might journey through every part of it at

an average of five francs per day, and enjoy every comfort. For my own part, I had no great reason to complain, even with my more scanty allowance; I was always sure of one good meal, and a comfortable bed; and I take this opportunity of remarking, that bodily strength is supported upon little. During these five days I made one meal, about seven or eight o'clock in the evening,—and, with the exception of a little bread and milk about ten in the morning, I took nothing until the next evening; and during this time I felt no diminution of strength, and enjoyed most excellent health.

My quick pace and buoyant feelings soon brought me to the hill above Verviers, a town lately risen into wealth and consideration by the excellence of its cloth manufactories, and pleasantly situated in a deep valley, upon a fine rapid stream, the name of which I do not recollect. I cannot say, that either on that day, or at any time during this journey to Ostend, I had any great dread of evil consequences from the cause which occasioned my departure from Spa; I could not believe that the manuscript of a trifling volume of tales could be of any importance, or affect my free-will in any way; but, having now experienced a total revolution in thought,—and my mind, as well as my eyes, being set in the

direction of home,—no conviction the most positive, that I had suffered myself to be alarmed without a cause, could then have effected a counter revolution, and induced me to turn my back upon the British Channel. I regretted considerably the loss of my manuscript; for though a trifle, it had been a source of great pleasure to me during the past winter, and was, indeed, a register of thoughts and feelings, I would not willingly have let slip from memory; and, at that time, I entertained no idea of attempting to re-write the manuscript.

I passed right through Verviers, and on to Liège, where I arrived about five o'clock in the afternoon. I passed through Liège also without stopping in it, skirting the suburbs until I got upon the Brussels' road; and about six miles farther, I stopped for the first time since leaving Spa, at an inn, in a small village, the name of which I think I never inquired. Having eaten nothing since morning, and walked not less than thirty-three miles, supper was truly acceptable,—and bed-time brought with it a sufficient inclination to avail myself of its indulgences. Whatever little misgivings I had felt in the early part of the day, respecting my safety, were now entirely dissipated. It was my custom at Spa, to go out in the morning and spend the whole day until

four o'clock, rambling about; so that if any inquiries had been made for me, my departure would not be discovered until I had almost reached the village where I then was.

Before half-past six next morning, I was on the road; with very little abatement in the buoyancy of the feelings which carried me onward, and with quite as much health and vigour as the day before. My bill the night before, had only been two francs, for supper and bed; so that, this morning I had a franc to spare; and therefore, on the strength of this, and the prospect of a good breakfast, I walked as far as St. Trond, where I provided amply against the fatigues of the day.

I have no intention of giving the reader any details of a journey through a part of the Netherlands so well known as this is: but after travelling with me from Luxembourgh, many dreary miles, to Spa, it would have been scarcely civil to leave him there at so inclement a season, and without any society, and to decline his company as far as I was going. This is my chief reason for trespassing upon the tourists' preserves, —and to them, as well as to the reader, this apology is certainly due: but besides, I was desirous of bringing my work to a proper conclusion, as we round a sentence to a proper period; and above

all, of avoiding so great a breach of courtesy, as to omit the ceremony of saying *au revoir* to the reader, who no doubt feels himself by this time upon intimate terms with me,—and who, for aught I know, may even have contracted for me, some degree of friendship. With these explanations, I proceed on my journey.

Before three, I passed through Louvain,—stopping only to ask the road out of it; and about half-past six, just at deepening dusk, I walked into Brussels. Next morning betimes, I had left it behind me. This day, I had only twenty-seven miles to walk, to Ghent; having considerably exceeded my average the day before. I took my frugal breakfast about eight miles from Brussels, and passed through Alost about mid-day; I consequently reached Ghent, my destination, at an early hour. Never having been in Ghent before, I spent some hours in strolling through the streets,—sitting on the chain in the market place,—looking at the descendants of those who in other days had so sturdily maintained their privileges, against the most callous of tyrants, and the worst of bigots,—and standing on the quay, gazing on the lazy Scheldt, until dusk reminded me of supper and rest. I found good accommodation at the Wheat-sheaf; situated close by St. Buvon, whose deep-mouthed bell,

then tolling the hours of peaceful night, had so often rung out the alarum of war.

There are two roads from Ghent to Bruges; one the post road,—the other, a horse road, along the bank of the canal. I chose the latter. I was somewhat tempted to step into the boat, which was just leaving Ghent for Bruges as I reached the canal, about seven in the morning; but I resisted a temptation, which demanded a breach of my system of economy; and adhered to my plan of pedestrianism. Let not the reader suppose, that I prefer standing or sitting in a track boat, especially on a canal, the banks of which rise on both sides higher than the boat's mast-head, to the exercise of walking: but if ever there can be an exception to the superiority of pedestrianism, it is in this part of the Netherlands, where the country is a dead level, and where there is little to interest in the inhabitants.

Even to one, who has been accustomed to the most populous parts of England, the Netherlands is a wonderful country; it seems to teem with inhabitants: it is also, a beautiful example of fertility. I almost believe, that along the whole line of the canal from Ghent to Bruges, a distance of twenty-five miles at least, it might be possible to throw a stone from one house to another. Leaving Ghent, I walked through

several miles of nursery and garden ground,—the soil of which was so fine and smooth, that one might have supposed it to have passed through a sieve.

This day proved the first exception to the fair weather, which had accompanied me from Spa. Ever since morning, a whitish film had been gradually spreading over the sky, which towards the horizon was dark and heavy. For some time, I believed I should reach Bruges before the rain commenced, and began occasionally to hope, that my conjecture might prove false: a little after mid-day, however, it was verified. I saw the surface of a pond by the way-side, dimpled with some "first drops," and the rain soon came down heavily. Before reaching Bruges, I was thoroughly wet, and I therefore determined to go on to Ostend without stopping.

The country between Bruges and Ostend, grows more and more uninteresting as you approach the sea; but being completely drenched, and the rain continuing to fall in torrents, I paid but little attention to any thing else than the stones that marked the distances. I reached Ostend just at night-fall, and was soon warm and dry in bed, in the *Lion d'or*, with a tray and a good supper, placed on a table beside me.

I was now on the frontier town of the Netherlands, and but a day's journey from Calais; one difficulty only remained,—I had no *passeport* to enter France.

A MARINE WALK.

A MARINE WALK FROM OSTEND TO DUNKIRK.

NEXT morning, very early, I awoke to the consciousness of having no passport, and to the necessity there was for providing myself with one; for though I was now within sight of France, I was in truth no nearer to it, in one sense, without a passport, than if I were still at Spa. Having taken an early breakfast, I immediately inquired the way to the house of the British consul,—a lieutenant in the navy, if I mistake not. Just as I reached his door, he also arrived at it,—having returned from the fish-

market, and carrying along with him a fine fresh turbot. When I mentioned my business, he hesitated at first,—telling me, if he rightly remembered, that some person bearing my name had been inquired for; but, when explaining the cause of my not being provided with a regular passport, and exhibiting a letter from Paris, from the individual mentioned in the last chapter, he began to listen more complacently; and, whether owing to my explanations, or from a wish to pay for the turbot with the five francs which he charged for the document, he in the end delivered to me a regular passport, to pass from the dominions of the king of the Netherlands, to those of the king of France,—a permission by the bye, which it seems strange a British consul should have the power of granting. I put the passport into my pocket, returned to the Golden Lion, paid my bill, and turned my back upon this frontier town of the *pays Bas*, just as the clock of the town-hall chimed eight.

I entered Ostend in the evening, and left it next morning, so that I cannot give my readers much information about it; it has churches and docks, and a harbour and a market-place; and seemed to me, rather preferable, as a place of residence, to either Calais or Boulogne.

The distance from Ostend to Dunkirk by the sea-shore, is nearly forty miles,—which is rather farther than I should have been inclined to walk merely for pleasure; but the day being fine, the beach for the most part hard, and the air off the sea invigorating,—I cannot say, that when I got to the end of my journey I felt at all fatigued by it. But I am, as yet, only at the commencement.

Nothing is more common than to take a walk upon the sea-beach,—but few people think of performing a lengthened journey from one place to another upon the sands; and indeed, this is hardly to be expected, for there are not of course, any inns or houses by the way, so that refreshment must be taken from the wallet,—and rest, upon some sand-hillock. It is not often however, that I have enjoyed a walk more, than I did upon that day, along the sea-beach from Ostend to Dunkirk, and, to one who can dispense for a day with the usual indulgences, a marine walk is a most agreeable, and refreshing change (especially in the *pays Bas*, where nature has so little variety); and presents many novel and beautiful appearances.

It was a fine sunshiny day, with light puffs of air. On one hand, I had the wide, blue swelling

sea, just curled, and the little creamy waves running short races upon the hard sand, and forming a white curve, as far as the eye could reach; vessels, seemingly impelled by more wind than there was on shore, were bearing in all directions,—some nearer, and others more distant; some, with the white sails which indicate foreign ships,—and some with the dingy canvas, which bespeaks British vessels,—and nearly all of them, with a full press of sail, to catch as much of the light variable breeze as possible. Before me, the fine sand sparkled with innumerable shells, and other marine productions; and the tread upon it, was hard and elastic; flocks of sea birds, now and then, came wheeling round, while others, were sailing in long lines, high in the air,—the smell of the sea, and the fresh air that came over it, were new and refreshing; and in short, to one in good health, and willing to receive agreeable impressions, nothing could be more delightful.

I recollect very well, that Ostend was ten miles at least behind me, before it seemed as if I had done much more than left the harbour, so novel and pleasant was my journey. It was about half-ebb tide, and the hard sand might be from two to three hundred yards broad; sometimes, I walked close to the sea, watching the little im-

potent waves, as they seemed constantly approaching, and yet gradually receded; sometimes, I employed myself in picking up, and examining, the shells and pebbles, which attracted the eye by the polish the spent wave had left upon them; and sometimes, I looked over the wide main, listening to the low murmur of the distant ocean,—and straining the eye, to discover the course and species of the different sails, many of them but specks between sea and sky.

About half-way between Ostend and Dunkirk, a river falls into the sea, which, from the appearance of the channel, must form a wide and deep creek at full tide. I saw it several miles before reaching it; and when I got to it, the puzzle was, in what manner I should get to the other side. About four miles up the stream, there is a village, and a bridge; but I felt a great disinclination to go six or seven miles round, when my road lay in a straight line before me.

The tide was quite back; the width of the channel might be about a quarter of a mile,—and over this, the bottom of which seemed to be fine hard sand, the river found its way in three or four separate streams; and there were besides, several back-water pools, which the tide had left. I determined to endeavour to ford these, and to

thread my way as I best could, rather than make my journey six miles longer. I therefore stripped myself of my lower garments, which I bundled up, and tied upon my back, and proceeded onward. It was of course entirely an experiment; for had any of the channels or pools proved deeper then I could ford, I must have been forced to return, and go round by the bridge after all. I can swim indeed, but I should not have liked to put my swimming powers to a proof, with a weight upon my back. I was not however, forced into the dilemma of choosing; by avoiding the deepest pools of back water, and leaping some narrow creaks, and by sounding the streams with my walking stick, and choosing the most eligible places, I reached *terra firma*, without ever having been deeper than four feet; and I certainly felt not a little pleased, that by a trifing exercise of resolution, I had so much shortened my journey. My clothes were perfectly dry, and in ten minutes I was quite comfortable, and again proceeding on my way.

Three or four miles farther, is the boundary line between France and the Netherlands. It is an imaginary one,—there being no river, nor any natural line of demarkation. About half a mile distant from each other, upon the heights, are the

frontier stations of the two countries. They also serve as smuggling preventive stations. As one is allowed to leave a country without any questions being asked, the guard at the Netherlands' station did not give himself any trouble about me; but when I arrived opposite to the French station, a whiskered, shabby-looking officer descended from the height, and intercepted my progress until he had ascertained from my *passeport*, that I was worthy of being numbered among the strangers in the dominions of his master. Half a franc saved a personal scrutiny for smuggled goods. I had none; but I do not like a stranger to paw me all over and thrust his hands into my pockets.

When I came within about four miles of Dunkirk, the tide had advanced so much, that I was forced to walk upon the soft sand near water mark. This I found excessively fatiguing; but my attention was diverted from the inconvenience, by the agreeable prospect of several vessels, making for the harbour under different tacks, and with a fine swell of sail,—for the wind had considerably freshened with the incoming tide, and the curling waves, crested with white, were now lashing the beach and covering it with foam.

I had eaten nothing from leaving Ostend, ex-

cepting a little biscuit which I had put into my pocket; it may, therefore, be easily credited, that I was too intent upon reaching an *auberge*, in Dunkirk, to notice very minutely the fortifications, and moats and shipping, as I passed them.

The *Gerbe du blé* received me for the night. The waiter at this inn had outlived the prosperity of his town,—for, to every observation I made to him, respecting Dunkirk, his answer was the same; it was nothing more than, *Ah, Monsieur, dans le temps!* with an accompanying shake of the head; leaving the questioner to suppose, that there was a time when Dunkirk was unequalled for every good thing that can render a town illustrious.

With this walk I finish my work; it was the last of my "solitary walks through many lands." At Dunkirk I ceased to be a pedestrian; a few hours of land carriage brought me into the square at Calais. *Charmante Annette* was chiming on the bells of the tower. So it was four years ago when I stepped upon the pier,—and all the events which had filled up the intervening time, came tumultuously to my thoughts;—the day when I first stepped upon foreign soil,—the new sensations which one experiences upon the first view of a foreign land,—the expectations which then

filled me, of seeing strange climes and distant cities. All this was passed: I had seen them; and was I wiser, or better, or happier? or rather, let me alone ask, was I happier? for what is there beside happiness, that any one desires to live for? On this day, I was assuredly less happy than on the day when the wonders of foreign lands were in prospect; but this did not prove that life's measure of enjoyment had been diminished by these four years' travel. I knew not how much or how little enjoyment these four years might have produced at home,—nor is it possible to predicate of the future, how, or to what extent it might have been influenced; or whether a lighter or a deeper shade might have been thrown over it, by the different events which must have taken place,—the new connexions which must have been formed,—and the changes in sentiments, opinions, and prejudices, which must have been wrought in me, had these four years of my life been spent at home, in place of in foreign lands. All this is a riddle; and no one living can throw any light upon it. It is a pleasing, though an idle occupation, to speculate upon what might have been, had the circumstances of any past period been different from what they were; but it is not altogether a useless employment, to trace

the most important events of life, back to their first causes. The inquiry will throw much valuable light upon the philosophy of life; for it will shew how feeble are the weapons wielded by human strength in a war with destiny.

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